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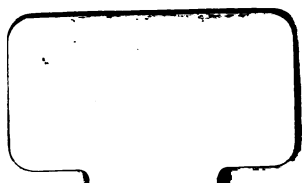
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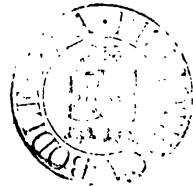
# ANGELO.

A ROMANCE OF MODERN ROME.

"Yet there are things whose strong reality  
Outshines our fairy-land."—LORD BYRON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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# A N G E L O.

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## CHAPTER I.

“Rest awhile,  
Children of wretchedness! The hour is nigh.”  
S. T. COLERIDGE.

MATURIN was not many minutes in reaching the dwelling-house he had lately passed, the abode, as he rightly conjectured, of the guardian of those wretched vaults; but it was only after repeated applications at the bell, and loud blows upon the door, that he could succeed in gaining sight, at one of the narrow windows, of a bullet-shaped head, enveloped in a red night-cap, and a face, coarse, bloated, and repulsive to the last degree. Here he held a parley, which seemed to his

impatience, as lengthy as the Trojan War, before he could obtain admittance; and when the bolts were withdrawn, he had to recommence his story, the conclusion of which placed him as near the attainment of his object as the beginning.

"I have told you who I am," he reiterated, "and I tell you again, I will bear you blameless. There is no official record of the young man's committal; he has been thrown here to gratify some private malice. I am convinced that he is at the point of death, and I demand that you give me the means instantly of seeing to his state."

"He is a vile heretic, Signor; a holy father has been with him, and he blasphemed the Church. I know the ways of the Secret Office; he is as safe here as there."

"But he is a foreigner, and no one here had a right to interfere with his religion. We are only losing time; where are your keys?"

"So, ho! a poor man is to give away his

bread, is he? and to do this, that, and the other, at the beck and call of a roystering jackanapes? A prisoner is given to me to take care of, and I will take care of him too! I know *my* duty—you had better know *yours*, and be off, or—”

“You have not done your duty as a man or a Christian. That prisoner has either been starved or tortured; I ask only to see him. You should have a proper order for his release. I have told you I have the power to compel your obedience, and I warn you not to put me to the proof.”

“The power, quotha!” and there was a sneering braggadocio in his look, which roused Maturin’s ill-restrained ire. “And who are you, I wonder? A dressed-up, smooth-shaven, woman-faced nooney! You come here indeed, and *demand* the release of state prisoners!” He moved almost imperceptibly towards a table on which lay a huge knife. “I shall have a dancing girl come next, and demand



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From where he stood, Maturin had straight before him the lancet window through which Jacopo had spoken to him ; it was still open, and the woman was close beside it. He saw she was only to be subdued by a will as powerful as her own, and said,—“ You do not mean to do as I have told you ? ”

“ No ! ”

He fired a pistol through the window ; but the charge passed so near her, and the act was so sudden, that she screamed hideously, and turned deadly pale.

“ You are not hurt—you are not even touched,” said Maturin ; “ but I have two brace of pistols about me, and this one has another loaded barrel. My next shot shall be better aimed. Now, collect the things I told you, and be quick ! We shall also want some brandy ; there is some in that cupboard—the same that you give to the Padre.”

There was no longer any hesitation in her movements, and in a few minutes she stood before Maturin fully prepared.

“You will go before me,” he said, “and if you attempt treachery”—he placed the muzzle of the weapon upon her coarse thick neck,—“if—mind,—in one instant you are a dead woman!”

She muttered something, left the house, and led the way to the gate, and down the passage which Maturin had already partially explored. As they proceeded, the roof became lower, and the path narrower, and he began to be apprehensive lest soon it would not admit his burly guide, who, however, tramped on as if perfectly acquainted with the route. They had penetrated about two hundred yards, when he found doors embedded in the thick and damp walls to the right and the left, and from these, sometimes imprecations, sometimes sounds of misery, broke upon his ear, and made him shudder.

At length they reached one that seemed the termination of the passage; and putting down her basket, the portress applied the key, and



they entered a cell, of which the atmosphere, at the first moment, was almost insupportable. When his eye had become accustomed to the light, Maturin perceived a confused mass upon the floor at the further end, but it was entirely motionless, and a horrible fear oppressed him.

"Fred, my poor fellow," he said, as he stooped down, intending to raise his friend,—he recoiled with a shiver, for the hand that he touched was cold and death-like.

"More light ! more light !" he said to the woman who stood by his side ; and something rustled past him, he knew not what, whilst she was taking the candle out of the lantern.

On a closer inspection, it was, indeed, a dead body which lay there, a body in the first stage of decay, and mangled in different parts ; but, horrible to relate, it was closely chained to another figure, doubled beneath it, and, to all appearance, as pulseless and as still. Maturin raised the head of this, and recognised the features of Frederic Dimsdale. He pressed his

finger on the temple ; there was a slight, faint beat, and his courage rose.

“ The water,” he said, “ quick ! ” and saturating his handkerchief, he let it drip over the face, then bound it round the brows, and gently rubbed the chest and hands, which were cold as stone.

There was, at length, the slightest possible inspiration ; he lived, and Maturin himself breathed more freely.

“ Now, my good woman, the brandy ; ” he put the cup to the still colourless lips ; but the teeth were rigidly closed, and the head fell heavily on one side.

“ Try, and swallow, Fred—try and rouse yourself ; ” he parted the lips forcibly, and poured the spirit into his mouth, then bathed his forehead with it, and the palms of the hands.

A few convulsive struggles, a few deep sighs, and sensibility gradually returned. Frederic stared wildly about him, then closed his eyes again, and trembled violently. At this mo-

ment, the ray of light that broke through the grate above was intercepted, and there was a sharp, short bark.

"Spitfire, my boy!" said Maturin cheerily; and the poor sufferer almost leapt out of his arms.

"All right, aye?" said Maturin; "come, we must cheer up!"

The beldame, to do her justice, had been concerned at the scene, and now busied herself in trying to sever the heavy chains which bound the living to the dead. Fred gazed vacantly at her for a minute or two, then turned his face upon Maturin's shoulder, clung to him, and wept like a child.

"They have been kept without food," said Maturin.

"It is true, Signor."

"By whose order?" but she would not answer, and went on plying the file.

The paroxysm subsided, Maturin reached the basket, and put the roll it contained into

Frederic's hand, but the eagerness with which he began to devour it was frightful, and it was necessary to interpose repeated draughts of water to prevent suffocation.

"Old boy!" he said, at the conclusion of his repast, "old boy! God bless you!"

"So! you will do now," said Maturin; "God be thanked! Let us thank God!"

He was still kneeling by his side, and supporting him with his arm—their hands were firmly grasped—and they were silent for a few moments. Maturin was getting up, and Spit-fire gave a second notice of his near vicinity. Fred rose somewhat more nimbly than might have been expected, whistled, and thrust his hand through the grating. The sudden movement threw his horrible burthen with some force upon the woman, who, looking up, and guessing in a moment the source of the whole discovery, uttered a savage *maladetto*, and threw down the file.

"It was an accident," said Maturin, who

perceived her flushed and ferocious countenance ; " it was an accident."

" Accident or no accident," said she ; " if that is all I am to get ——." She rose, and in a second had darted out of the cell ; the key was on the outer side of the door, her hand was upon it—she intended no secrets should transpire from that dismal tomb. But something prevented the door from closing ; yet she pulled it with all her might, and it had never served her so before,—she stamped and cursed. When she had exhausted herself, Maturin, in the calmest possible voice, said,—

" Now, listen,"—he clicked the lock of his pistol, the muzzle of which was, in fact, within a few inches of her head. She screamed, loosed her hold, and the door swung heavily back.

Frederic had dragged himself to the spot.

" Diavolo !" she vociferated, " but I'll be revenged ! "

" Better be quick, Mother," said he, " he

is—" and he whispered something in her ear.

She turned pale, and trembled violently, then eyed Maturin, who stood with his weapon full cocked, and close behind her.

"Mother of heaven!" she ejaculated, "save me!" and very piously crossed herself.

"Woman," said Maturin, and he assumed a sternness quite terrific, as he got scent of Fred's manoeuvre, "had you conducted yourself with honesty, you might possibly have been not only forgiven your past brutality, but liberally rewarded for your present services. For this treachery, which you will have no opportunity of repeating, you shall be exposed and punished. Take off your shawl, and cast it upon the ground."

She obeyed with evident trepidation.

"Put your hands behind you." Her eyes seemed ready to start from their sockets, and her teeth chattered, but she did as he commanded.

"Take this, Fred,"—he handed him a pistol,

—“and if she stir, shoot her dead.” He then took up the shawl, with which he tied her hands firmly together, forbade her to move one step at the peril of her life, and possessed himself of the key to prevent future surprises. His next object was to relieve poor Fred of his disgusting burthen, to which he was thus attached. Each prisoner had a strong leather girth round him above the hips, and to this were secured the upper ends of two chains. One chain, consisting of four long and heavy links, descended to a kind of double ring fixed round the ankle. The second chain of eight links, each of the same weight and length with the four, united the two together, so that they could stand about six feet apart; but day and night they had never been for one moment unfettered, and for three days had not tasted food. As Maturin was fortunately armed with a keen stiletto, the severance of the girdle was soon accomplished, but the ankle ring was a serious obstacle. It was massive, and had a lock, but a secret one;

and the only means seemed to be the slow operation of the file. He worked with vigour, but it would evidently require many hours to get through it, and Vorni must not be deserted on that day. Frederic, too, was becoming faint, and seemed to suffer exquisite pain under the performance. The real prisoner observed the dilemma, and thought it a good opportunity to make terms for herself; her fears of Maturin's satanic powers having lessened considerably since she had seen him thus fairly beaten.

"You may try again," she said, "but it's only myself that can do it." Maturin observed, what he had not done before, that she had in fact liberated the foot of the other prisoner.

"Are you willing to do it?" said Maturin.

"How can I, fool?"

Certain symptoms about Frederic induced him not to be captious.



"I release your hands, then," he said, "provided you will release him."

She nodded a surly assent, and the manacle fell off almost at her touch. Maturin saw directly that her first use of the file had been merely a *ruse*, and kept a determined eye upon her movements. There was now no obstacle to their leaving the cell. Frederic had had a draught of water, and was revived. Maturin opened the door, and they sallied forth, the conductress in the van, bearing the light, they had reached about the centre of the passage, and Fred, who had been leaning all the way heavily upon Maturin, stopped.

"It is of no use," he said; "I am maimed, crippled for life—the torture is more than I can endure."

"The irons?" asked Maturin.

"The vermin—rats—they have mangled one foot. I had not strength to keep them off."

Maturin shuddered.

The guide had noted the pause, and taken advantage of it to hasten her step. Maturin understood her, and was not yet to be outwitted.

"We shall have a key turned upon us now," said he; "I can manage you,—throw yourself on my shoulder—quick!" he stooped, received his burthen, and hastened on, a second Æneas. He came up with the traitress just as she reached the gate—but to her dismay it was closed. She uttered a fierce exclamation; then took up a stone, and commenced a series of blows, which seemed to attract speedy attention, for there was the sound of many feet on the other side. At last they heard the voice of Jacopo, whose heart, after many appeals from his partner, relented; for the gate turned upon its heavy revolver, and Frederic closed his eyes as the cheery sun once more fell upon them with a brightness they could not support. A file of *gens d'armes* were drawn out to receive the party, and Jacopo looked to the commanding

officer. To his utter surprise that functionary, instead of arresting Maturin, saluted him with the most deferential respect, and the men grounded their arms.

"I am glad to find an escort here," said Maturin, with great composure and an air of command. "I have work for all. See, my men, this is the way devils in the human form have brought distress and odium on the good state,"—he pointed to Frederic. "My friend there, an English gentleman, sympathised with the people's sufferings, and see what he has been made to endure! Soldiers! Christians! I found him famished, mawled by vermin, and chained to the dead!"

There was a burst of indignation and horror.

"Captain Brunno, my presence, you know, is required elsewhere for some hours; and I must trust to you to see Mr. Dimsdale carefully removed to my hotel, and placed under the care of my servant, who is a fellow-countryman of his own. This man and woman,"

—pointing to Jacopo and his partner, who stood utterly bewildered,—“ you will place in custody till further orders. The law made them jailors—their own evil dispositions, traitors and murderers. My men! those dungeons contain other victims. You will see them, you will administer to their wants. You will alleviate their sufferings, you will save them from death, and—you will care likewise for the dead. In a short time there shall be justice for all—justice, and, I hope, humanity !”

“ Captain, I must borrow your horse.”

He turned to take leave of Fred, and found Spitfire licking the blood which welled from a wound on his master's head. There was a general sensation, and Maturin had reached the foot of the hill before a prolonged and enthusiastic *viva* announced that *his* fidelity, no less than Spitfire's, had touched a chord in the human heart.

## CHAPTER II.

“ Lo ! the giant *Frenzy*,  
Uprooting empires with his whirlwind arm,  
Mocketh high Heaven !”

S. T. COLERIDGE.

It wanted just a quarter to ten when Maturin made his appearance in the breakfast-room in the Corso.

“ My good fellow,” said the Count, “ where in the name of wonder have you been ?”

The Countess looked amazement, and little Minnie, a merry girl of seven years old, laughed outright. Maturin moved towards a glass, and was no less astonished at the reflection he saw of himself. His neckcloth had been taken off to tie round poor Frederic’s wounded brow, and his black hair was nearly lost

beneath a powder of crumbling granite, brushed from the roof of the subterranean passage of the Cenci. His waistcoat presented a curious mosaic of all shades of umber, and the rest of his attire bore dismal testimony to the state of the abode he had just quitted.

"I really beg pardon," he said, and bowed to the Countess; "I was absorbed by the adventure I have had, and wholly unconscious." He was leaving the room, but Vorni insisted on hearing his story; when it was concluded,—

"And who," said he, much excited,—"what monster has been at the bottom of this?"

"That is a revelation for another time," said Maturin; "I must now beg permission to retire. Madame, you have been indulgent."

"We ought already to be on our way to La Santita," said Vorni, "and you must adorn for a surety."

"And something besides," said Maturin, and looked at his fingers.

"Mamma," said Minnie, "we will go and see this poor prisoner, take him some wine, and comfort him, whilst papa is away this morning." She glided out of the room, and the Count's eyes followed with fondness the little thoughtful favourite.

"I dare say," said the Countess, turning to Maturin, "you have taken nothing, although up the whole night."

"A cup of coffee and a biscuit in my dressing-room would be acceptable," said he, "with your kind permission, and then there will be no loss of time."

"The better plan will be," said Vorni, "for me to precede you to the Quirinal; I can get through certain matters before you come, and you will still be in time to pay your respects."

The Countess gave Maturin a meaning and an imploring look, a look which he instantly comprehended.

"Excuse me, Count," said he, "but this other affair must have immediate attention."

Perhaps you would be kind enough to write to *il Governatore* and tell him what I have done, offering any security on my part for the appearance of Dimsdale. Ruspoli is captious of his authority you know ; and, if you would do me this favour, I will be with you in a quarter of an hour."

" Good ! Vanish !" As he left the room, Maturin was met by Minnie.

" A nice warm bath, Signor, just ready," she said, " and mamma and I will take care of the poor friend."

" *Mille remerciemens, Signorina ! avant de partir je baiserais la petite main,*" and he flew up the *escalier* two or three stairs at a time.

A hasty but complete renovation of the toilette was completed—the horses were pawing in the court below—he heard the steps of the carriage let down, opened his door to descend, and found the Countess in the corridor pale and trembling.

She went up to him—" Oh, Signor ! Luigi



is just come in ; there are such reports abroad this morning ! It is vain to ask you to intreat the Count not to go—he has refused me on my knees—but, my only hope is in you. You are so popular ! and you will not lose sight of him,—will you ? You will think of his poor wife, his little child, his absent son ?”

“Trust me, Madame, as if I were that son ; compose yourself ! God will be with us !”

“That is what *he* says—but those fearful mobs !”

In a cheery voice, Vorni called “Bello ! Bello !” a familiar name he had given Angelo, in allusion to his person, which the Roman ladies admired extravagantly.

“List to him !” said the Countess, “so fatally confident !”

“We must not anticipate evils, Madame,” said Maturin, “but *trust*”—he pointed upwards.

“*Adieu, Signor,*” said Minnie, who ran up at that moment. “*Papa vous attends.*”

“*Signorina, je vous salue.*” He kissed her tiny fingers, bowed to the Countess, drew on his gloves, and was quickly beside Vorni in the carriage. Before they left the court, a little familiar voice attracted them ; they looked up at the window, from whence the mother and child were watching the departure. The Countess waved her handkerchief, and it fell ; the Count kissed his hand gaily, and they dashed at a rapid pace down the Corso.

Whatever may be the political bias of the moment, the fête-loving Romans allow no public business to proceed without a demonstration and a holiday, and when the ministers turned the corner of the Condotti, various groups were to be seen, some making their way quietly onwards, some drawing out into a line to salute them, and others standing in deep conference. In the Piazza di Spagna, the movement was more decided ; gay banners floated from the roofs, ladies were to be seen at the windows and on the balconies, and as

they approached the Quirinal, a dense mass was awaiting them. They were penetrating this at a fair pace, when the reins were suddenly checked, and, closely veiled and apparently unattended, the beautiful Linterna stood beside the carriage. Vorni looked up impatiently at the interruption; Angelo recognised her and leant forward; she put a slip of paper into his hand, which the crowd around considered a petition as a matter of course.

"I have heard more since last night," she whispered hurriedly; "obey this, in the name of God! disobey, and Rome is lost!"

The note ran thus:—"Count Vorni's life is gone if he approach the Palazzo of the Cancellaria this day. Let Signor Maturino also beware!"

"Pshaw!" said Vorni, as he read it; "one of your admirers, Bello, anxious to make herself of consequence in your eyes. You will never wear that wild Welch rose."

Maturin looked out of the window—why,

he knew not, but Leoline had been presenting herself to his thoughts in every phase and form during the last four-and-twenty hours, and he would fain forget her. There were loud shouts now as they drew near the Pontifical Palace, which he acknowledged; but Vorni was fretful at the delay.

As they left the carriage, an aged crone thrust a dirty piece of paper into Maturin's hand. "Read it!" she said, and disappeared before he could see her face; but there was a tone in her voice which sounded familiar, and he obeyed her.

"For the sake of the noble lady your mother—for the sake of your father who lives, *and of her who loves*—go no further to-day.

(Signed)

"A FRIEND, *and one who knows.*

"Postscriptum. Keep *him* back too."

But, dear as life is to man, and instinctively as the care of it rises paramount to every

other, there may be moments when its obligations and its duties supersede even itself. Vorni and Maturin approached their sovereign not simply as individuals ; they were the connecting links between him and his people ; and they held in their hands, they fondly hoped, the bond of prosperity and peace which should unite the two. It was a position of fearful responsibility, and *self* sank before it. Nothing, however, could be more encouraging than their reception. Uninfluenced by his confessor, who, from alleged indisposition, had not been in attendance the last few days, his Holiness was gracious and wholly confiding ; he heard with attention all that Vorni submitted, and gave his unhesitating approval of the meditated measures of reform. He heard also, with marked satisfaction, the project for disbanding the civic guard ; he was but too ready to believe in the loyalty and right feeling of his subjects. To the ministers themselves, he said, he could never be sufficiently grateful ;

from a state of abject distress in which they had found the city, they had restored it to absolute life and vigour ; and the spirit of anarchy, which had threatened the ruin of all society, was transformed by their exertions into a spirit of order and obedience. " May the blessing of God," he added, solemnly and fervently, and extended his right arm, " descend upon you, my friends, giving you strength to finish your good work ! May it also descend upon my beloved people, enabling them to discern and bless their benefactors ! "

Vorni and Maturin approached the pontiff, and bent on one knee ; he laid his hand on the head of each, and pronounced a low benediction, then remained motionless and silent a few moments. In spite of his internal heresy, Maturin revered his prince ; he knew him to be sincere, though mistaken ; and he knew, also, that a more benevolent heart never warmed a human breast. But Vorni was religious, not only by a strong indwelling

sense of the Divine love and presence, but by an unquestioning belief in the traditions of his Church. The words of the Holy Father were not, therefore, to him the words of an ordinary mortal; and when, on parting, some little misgiving was expressed as to the state of public feeling, he felt a communicated strength from the benediction he had just received; and his eyes glistened, his whole bearing was confident and fearless, as he said,—

“Sire, I am the favoured medium of your paternal wishes to a people who have your prayers. Fear nothing! God will aid me!”

They drove down the Monte Cavallo, and halted a few moments at the Palazza Colonna. Whilst Vorni was speaking to a secretary of the embassy, Maturin was attracted by four men in the volunteer uniform, who stood by the gates. The speaker was gesticulating vehemently.

“It is his last hour of triumph,” he said; “at noon he dies!” and cast a baleful look into

the carriage. The rest turned their eyes at the same moment upon the Count; but not one saluted him. There was a great throng up the Gesù, the Cesarini, the Sudario, and also a very decided gloom; but when they reached S. Andrea, they found awaiting them a long procession, headed by a band and waving colours, though whether animated by a hostile or a friendly spirit was for some minutes doubtful, as there was a deep silence till the carriage was entirely surrounded.

Maturin looked at Vorni; he was calm and composed. All at once there was a shout—a prolonged and gladsome shout; the bells pealed forth, the drums were beat, and “*Viva il Ministro!*” “*Viva Maturino!*” “*Liberta!*” “*Justizia!*” “*Liberta al Carcerato!*” rent the air. But soon came sounds more sinister, at least to Papist ears. “*A terra i Gesuite!*” “*Al morte i Preti!*” and then an effigy of a friar, with the head downwards, was borne for some distance offensively close to the carriage.



Vorni compressed his lips, and drew himself back. A party came close to the opposite window, and cheered him; but he kept his eyes fixed upon a paper he drew from his pocket, and made no acknowledgment. A low groan caught Maturin's attention, and certain signs and gestures aroused his apprehensions; he said a few words to Vorni, but the Count's fatal temper was in the ascendant. An offence to religion, in any shape, was a personal offence to himself; he waited not to discriminate between the innocent and the guilty in such a motley crew, and maintained the scornful expression and haughty bearing he had assumed. All at once they came to a dead stop; the horses reared and plunged, the crowd was driven backwards, screams and curses were heard on all sides, and none knew wherefore or by whom the confusion was created. After some moments of painful uncertainty a clear space was made immediately before them, and, as if by magic, a gallows

appeared upon it, bearing the figures of Jacopo and his wife. Maturin shuddered and turned pale. Had the *gens d'armes* been overpowered, and were they now face to face with a band of lawless murderers? Had he, by exposing one outrage, incited to a worse? He was in an agony of self-reproach and trepidation. A gust of wind relieved him in part, by carrying off the bonnet from the female culprit, and discovering a head of straw; and the next instant his name was shouted forth with an enthusiasm, and taken up in the distance with an unanimity, which restored his confidence, and sent the vital current gaily back to its wonted channels.

“*Maturino il Salvatore!*” “*Maturino il amico de' Popoli!*” “*Maturino il giusto!*” and divers other epithets, all applying to his early morning's exploit, bid fair to deafen them by the time they reached the Cancellaria; and Maturin could not refrain, in passing beneath the portico, as with one hand he

brushed a gathering moisture from his eyes, grasping with the other that of his companion. Vorni returned the pressure warmly.

"You deserve it all, my dear fellow," he said; "and may God for ever bless ye!"

They were in the middle of the grand *cortile*, and again before the public eye. The graceful galleries that, tier above tier, rose upon ranges of granite columns, were filled with the *élite* of Roman aristocracy and beauty. Embroidered handkerchiefs floated gaily in the air, and bouquets were flung about; but, strange to say, there was a cold dead silence below, and Maturin instantly perceived that, instead of the usual guard to the entrance of the Palazzo, there was a rude assemblage of men, attired mostly in the volunteer uniform, and among them he descried the individuals whose violent speech and gestures had attracted him at the Colonna. But Vorni had ceased to think of everything but his mission; *that* was invested in his eyes

with a sacred character; it had received the approval, it was followed by the prayers, of God's Vicegerent; and he was strong in the might of that faith, before which human motives and earthly praise are but as the elemental strife, which, agitating the surface of the ocean, leaves undisturbed the repose of its solemn depths. He had collected his papers, descended from the carriage, and was crossing the Piazza in a state of absorption, but with his usual rapid step, as a low whistle ran through the crowd, and caused him to look round. Angelo was close behind, when the burly Calusso rudely thrust himself between them, and his savage eye-glance struck the first chill into the lion heart of the statesman. Instantaneously, there was a slight rustling, a hissing sound, a heavy fall! High above the surrounding heads a dagger was flourished; it reeked with the life-blood of the Count! So well had the blow been aimed, so surely the oath been kept, that with one sigh, Vorni was a corpse!

Angelo sprang forward, he all but grasped the murderer,—

“Villain!” he exclaimed, and again the fatal and well-practised whistle struck his ear; but he thought not of himself; he had reached the prostrate body, he was about to raise it, when he received a sharp blow on the head. The weapon of a second assailant was ready pointed to plunge into his neck, bared in the right part by this involuntary movement;—but, on the instant, a slight form, in the long white robe of the Dominican order, rushed frantically forward, raised a thin and shadowy hand, then shrieked, and dropped upon the ground!

The crowd fell back;—there was no trophy this time to be brandished, for the dagger had found a sheath in the frail protecting arm, and had resisted the assassin’s effort at withdrawal. But a wild and savage shout arose, as if to shame the silence of the stupefied spectators above, and a body of men, with Calusso conspicuous in the midst, marched away in perfect

order, singing, as they passed through the palace gates,—

“E quando con essi fien vani i moschetti,  
Lampeggi la punta de' nostri stilette!”\*

The suborned and false-hearted soldiery at length began to assemble at their deserted post, and were anxious to convey the wounded youth to the nearest *ospedale*; but Angelo, quick-sighted, despite the accumulated horrors of the moment, motioned them aside, and in his own arms, bore from the fatal spot, the bleeding and death-like, but gentle and heroic preserver of his life.

\* “And when we can't kill them with musket and ball,  
Upon them with daggers in hand we will fall.”

*Revolutionary Song, 1848.*

### CHAPTER III.

"Seldom is the heart aware  
Of all that dwells within ;  
And oft, unnoticed, harbour there  
The seeds of woe and sin.  
And oft within the breast conceal'd,  
High powers and virtues lie,  
Till, by some great event reveal'd,  
They claim ascendancy.  
We gaze on ocean's mighty tide,  
In tempest and in sleep ;  
But when hath mortal glance descried  
The fountains of the deep ?  
And thus, in that unceasing strife  
Which forms the *action* of our life,  
The thought which checks, the wish which pleads,  
The motive which decides our deeds,  
Are veil'd within as deep a gloom  
As that which shrouds the sleepers of the tomb."

REV. JAMES BANDINEL.

As in individual experience, so in a nation's destiny, there occur occasionally epochs of darkness—epochs of moral pravity, of physical

debasement, of deep and bitter desolation ; and, were human reason allowed to pronounce its own verdict on such occasions, it must inevitably trace to *Divine abandonment* a state of things apparently at variance with all antecedents, and irremediably pernicious in its bearing and consequences. But, in nothing is the wondrous providence of God more manifest, than in the gradual development of the highest good, out of the clang and clash of the direst evil ; and never is man further from the true solution of his "being's end and aim," than when he presumptuously substitutes his own philosophies, for the inscrutable will of his great Author.

It was not with the general concurrence, but, as we have shown, by the mad passions of a clique of unprincipled and desperate men, that the patriot Vorni fell : still, that he should have fallen in the blaze of day, and not a hand been uplifted to stay the assassin's arm, not a voice raised in reprobation of his crime, were



circumstances to make Rome bewail her weakness, and blush at her shame; and for a time, as may well be supposed, a moral paralysis benumbed the energies of her valiant men, and struck dumb the counsels of her wise. But, if deliberately to tolerate wrong be to abet it, to flee before its face is to encourage its sway; and severe, indeed, will be the judgment of future ages on a prince, who could coolly desert his people, when most they needed from him an ensample of chivalric honour and heroic daring.

The dastardly murder of one minister, and the barely rescued life of another, acted on the fears, rather than the generous instincts, of Pio Nino; and in four-and-twenty hours he fled, leaving friends, servants, and subjects to the mercies of mad misrule and universal licence. Maturin was among the last in resigning a power, which, for the peace and safety of the city, he nobly deemed was not lightly to be cast aside. But when, from his in-

glorious retreat, the Pontiff issued a brief, vesting all authority in the hands of a special commission, the government had no longer a choice; they were virtually superseded, and, unappreciated and unthanked, retired from their posts. Then came the reign of anarchy—the pouring in of evil like a flood—the annihilation of all law—the brazen triumph of infidelity and socialism! nor could even Maturin, with all his hopeful spirit, discern in the troubled sky one star of hope, one streak of a coming dawn.

It was about a fortnight after the thrilling event at the Cancellaria, and the close of a day spent in consoling, as best he might, the unhappy Theresa, and arranging papers of the Count's, thenceforward the property of the historian, that he bent his steps to the Palazzo Daltoni, and then into the boudoir where we first introduced him to the lady of the mansion.

But he is no longer a stranger to the spot, and Adela is no longer its constant occupant;

her cares are divided now between the Cardinal, and a fair young creature who occupies her deserted couch in the favourite *sanctum*. He entered noiselessly, and stood by the side of the invalid; she was asleep, and angels might have been whispering her dreams, for a smile played about her rosy mouth, her eyelids quivered, and a bright warm glow tinted her cheeks. In a few moments she awoke, and with a beaming expression of pleasure, offered him her hand. He bent down, and gently pressed it to his lips; then withdrew the covering which concealed its fellow, and looked at it long and anxiously as it lay, almost lividly white, in a black sling that supported the arm, which was closely bandaged.

“And does my own Leoline no longer suffer pain?” he asked nervously; “and may I summon the good uncle to rejoice over our little heroine?”

“There is no pain now, dear Angelo, and as to the summons, it will be needless. I have

had a letter from that kind Mr. Huick, who has lingered at Naples, and will return to Rome with him,—ah! when do you think?” and her eyes glistened.

“Next week?”

“Nooney! next week, indeed!” She patted his hand playfully, “what think you of to-morrow? And poor Fred, I have had a *wee* little note from him; and he is so brave, he means to walk here in the morning to be ready for the arrival.”

“Too brave, too brave; I must forbid it!”

“But not his coming? Adela, dear girl, how she is longing to see him! that first peep was so very brief! I would call you a cruel, a barbarous Doctor, if I could, and not be ungrateful.”

“Call me anything you please, so that—” He had been gazing on her with passionate entrancement, but, suddenly, her eyes met his, and he turned abruptly aside, went to the window, and drew the curtain still closer,

then doubled back upon her feet the ends of the velvet coverlid which concealed her figure, for the evening was sharp and chilly, and, resuming his usual thoughtful expression, took a seat a little behind her, and said,—

“I spent the greater part of last night with the Padre. He had an attack a few minutes after I arrived; it was very severe; and I do not think he will ever recover the shock of the Pope having left him behind—or rather, perhaps, not having consulted him on his flight.”

“The dreadful man!”

“Are you still afraid of him?”

“Yes, indeed!” and she shuddered.

“Then there is a little bit of cowardice in the composition after all!”

“I am a coward, whenever I even think of the Padre. It was no dream I had, dear Angelo,—I was as completely awake as I am at this moment, when he opened my door, walked to my bedside, put something into my bottle of

medicine ; and as he turned to go out, and I caught his face reflected in the glass, I recognised directly the horrible expression of countenance, which terrified me so much that evening at the Plas. Oh, it was no dream ! Besides, I know that you detected something in the mixture, or why should I have been so ill whilst taking it, and have recovered so quickly under your amateur skill ? But I shall hear all about it some day, when you have no longer any secrets from me, shall I not, Doctor mine ? ”

She turned her head as she concluded. Maturin looked troubled, and was very pale.

“ As Mr. Dimsdale will be here so soon,” he said, “ you will most likely never be alarmed by the Padre again. You will be strong enough to travel, I hope, in a few days. Fred is pining for Welch air ; and, on all accounts, it will be highly advisable to return home immediately ! ”

“ And you ? ”

"I must remain here,—for a time, certainly."

"Then, indeed, we shall remain too!"

"No, you must not."

"But there are reasons why we must, and shall, and *will*—that is to say, if you do. I have not told you all I could about the Padre; but I shall tell my uncle—and he will agree with me as to leaving you behind; but it is a secret."

"How many, do you think, know that famous secret of yours?"

"No one—it is my very own! I have never breathed it even to Adela."

"I could tell it you."

"Impossible!"

"I must whisper it;" he knelt down by the side of her couch, and took her little lame hand in both his own.

"It was the Padre's dagger—it was the Padre's arm which committed this outrage; was it not?"

She turned her face aside—she dared not say, yes—she could not say, no; and how encounter his earnest gaze?

“ I am aware of it all,” he continued; “ but do not be distressed. If the time had arrived for calling the miscreant to an account, his attempt on my own worthless life would form no item in that account. There are graver matters far between us; nay, I could find it in my heart to be grateful to him for that, when I remember the privileges, the happiness it has caused me.”

“ And yet you would make us all miserable by remaining in his power! ”

“ Do not say miserable; we *must* part, dear Leoline; and *should* we never meet again, I will not ask to be forgotten, but I do ask, steadily and fervently I ask, to be remembered without regret.”

“ I cannot, and I will not think it possible you should settle anywhere but in Wales; and I am very sure you *ought* not to remain in this



dreadful place, and in the power of that wicked man."

"It is my least point of danger!" he was about to rise, but she held his hand firmly, whilst with the other she shaded her face, and said,—

"You think, probably, that you will be held accountable, — that —" she hesitated — "a claim is established on you for a few words you uttered, perhaps half unconsciously, when you thought I was dying — dying too in your behalf, as it were. And I answered to those words as my heart dictated; for I knew—I *felt* —that poison was circulating in my veins, and I never foresaw your power of saving me; and I fancied—forgive me, dear Angelo, if it were a fault, if it were unmaidenly,—but I fancied, that when I was gone, you would be happier if you had heard from my own lips, that you were as dear to me as you said I was to you—if you could be convinced that I died happy, inasmuch as I had been the means of saving

you ; but, perhaps, I ought to have been quite still—perhaps —” she faltered, and buried her face in the pillow,—“you ought to have let me die, *then*.”

“Dear Leoline !” he said, in a low and almost inarticulate tone ; there was a sob, and the face sank still deeper. “Listen to me, darling, with your understanding as well as your heart !” he leant over the frame of the couch, and spoke rapidly. “There are moments in our lives when the soul will speak—will assert its mastery over all the prudence, all the calculation, all the conventionalism that the world can array against it. The occasion you referred to was an instance—the pent-up feeling, the burning thought, found utterance, and made me—an ingrate, a scoundrel !”

She raised her head suddenly—shook back her ringlets—looked at him wildly.

“Yes, made me what I say—an ingrate, a scoundrel : an ingrate, for abusing the con-

fidence reposed in me by your uncle and brother—a scoundrel, for establishing a demand upon affections I may never, alas ! finally claim.”

“ Angelo ! ”

He turned aside, and continued in a hurried and almost inarticulate tone ; “ I am no longer a member of the Romish Church, it is true—I am no longer a Jesuit. I have been formally and legally released from an erring faith, and vows tyrannically imposed in my nonage ; but another cloud hangs over my future—a cloud which has always enveloped, and now frowns on me more portentously than ever. If it *can* be dispersed, well—but if —— ”

“ We admit no *ifs*,” said Leoline, half rising and laying her hand upon his shoulder ; “ it is *yourself* we value. Is it not to *yourself* that we both owe our lives ? and not once, but twice, have you saved mine ! Dear Fred has written me a little volume about you, and what he intends to do, and what interest he has already

solicited for you in England. Our good Bishop, he says, would be only too glad of an opportunity to oblige my uncle. No, no—we *will* have the pleasure of disposing of you in *one* way—in another, you are free if—if you wish it.”

He turned his face, which had been determinately averted from her, and its deathly paleness gave place to a mingled expression of pleasure and tenderness; but he was silent, and again she shrank from a gaze so strangely at variance with his words. After a few moments' pause,—

“I must not,” he said, “I dare not allow my heart to speak—for my conscience says, ‘intreat rather to be forgotten—forgiven!’ Yes, Leoline, *forgiven*. Do not be incredulous. If my dreadful apprehension be realised, you will have much to forgive—very, very much. All I ask—and I ask it as a famishing man would ask a crust, a drowning man a helping hand—is, that if we part, *I* may be

the only sufferer; *mine* was the weakness—*mine*, and *mine* only, be the atonement ! ”

Leoline was puzzled, and knew not what to say ; maiden pride forbade further advances on her side, yet from the perfect understanding which had been established between them, how allow him to suppose she could ever part from him without regret—nay, without deep and unutterable pain ? Was he, too, justified in having a fear which she might not share—a difficulty she might not help him to combat ?

“ Dr. Maturin finds me no longer worthy his confidence,” she said, after a little pause ; “ it is right, therefore, that the past should be as if it never had been.”

“ Oh, Leoline, Leoline ! woman, woman ! who can love you, and still be wise ! ”

She looked up archly, and said—“ If wisdom consist in mystery, then is a certain Doctor of my acquaintance the most sagacious of Professors, and will no doubt ripen into a second Socrates.”

“May he but be blessed with thee for a Xantippe! and then”—

“What is it all about, naughty boy?” she put her cheek against the back of his hand, which hung over her couch,—“Xantippe will scold before her time, if you vex and plague her!”

He smiled, but his breast heaved, and again the colour forsook his brow, his lips, as he bent down and said, in a low hoarse voice—  
“A loyal and true affection is to be discerned rather in its denials, than its confessions—in its agony, than its happiness. There is a reason, a deep and bitter reason, why my long-cherished secret should have rent me in pieces rather than have reached your ear—your heart. I cannot, it would not be right in me, to enter upon a trouble, the force of which you could not, or perhaps *would* not apprehend. A little time will bring all to light; and if I shall then be able honourably to present myself before you, it will be to claim that which will

be dearer to me than my life ; if not, I wander forth, none will know whither—homeless and hopeless. Do not speak, darling—do not speak ! I am going to the Cardinal now—I will see you once more, at all events—I will see you when *they* come.”

He just touched her forehead with his lips, then hastily left the room, and encountered in the corridor, to his no small surprise, the ubiquitous Padre, whom he considered he had left the night before, too ill to quit his bed for a week at least.

## CHAPTER IV.

“ A woman’s love, we know, not yet avowed,  
Solicited, or bruited to the world,  
Is so o’erruled by virgin purity,  
And dignity serene of womanhood,  
It is a harmless guest. A pleasing fear,  
It plays observed upon the verge of thought,  
Like silent lightning in a summer sky,  
Whose lambent beauty does but hint the power  
Which may some other time be perilous.”

*Giudone, by W. SMITH.*

WHEN the Lady Adela, to the surprise of all her friends, appeared in the *salon* of the Countess Vorni, it was, as had been surmised by the sagacious Duchess, to seek an interview with Dr. Maturin; yet was the step taken from no sentiment that might flatter unduly the personal vanity of that individual. The affairs of State at the time were engrossing



the young Minister night and day ; and important as these undoubtedly were, yet, in the eyes of the impassioned Italian, they were entirely secondary to the slightest event, which bore in any way either on the memory or the fate of her lost lover. For two whole days Spitfire had not been seen at the Palazzo ; and divers as were the misfortunes which might naturally occur to that rare specimen of doghood, the restless recluse thought the circumstance of sufficient importance to demand an investigation. But minds of certain power have large indulgence, and her little grief would have had as courteous an audience, even had the creature's movements not previously attracted Maturin's own attention : how quickly afterwards the mystery was developed, we have already related. On her return home, she found, to her great delight, a note announcing the arrival of Miss Dimsdale in Rome, and soliciting the favour of an interview early the next morning—impatience to learn tidings of

her brother, forming the apology for all breach of etiquette.

What joy, what undreamt-of pleasure, to receive that sister of whom *he* talked with such enthusiasm of approval, such hyperbole of fraternal love! Before the bright eyes of Leoline had opened on the morning sun, a warm response was in the hands of *la camerière*, and by ten o'clock the stranger friends, the sisters elect, had met. Wondrous to tell, not either one was disappointed in the other. If Leoline gazed at the chaste and sculptured beauty of the Italian, with admiration approaching to awe, there was in her own innocent and joyous, yet highly intelligent countenance, a power to which her companion paid internal homage: in fine, each was conscious she saw enough to justify the commendation of him who was their common centre—and the cordiality engendered in a few moments under such a bond, was as sincere and well-established as that which results,

under ordinary circumstances, from years of intercourse. Leoline had much to hear—Adela much to tell; poor Fred's enthusiasm for a wild but gentlemanlike band of Liberals—his deafness to all admonition or warning on the subject, even from his betrothed—his cheerfulness at the Palazzo—the despair of all when he suddenly disappeared.

“And you were really told,” said Leoline, “that everything in his lodgings betokened—”

“The worst,” said Adela; “but I have hopes now,—many little things induce me to think it was not so. That charming Dr. Maturin, whom I saw last night, exhorts me to keep up my spirits, and promises me faithfully that, after to-day, he will never rest till he has found him living or dead. He has been active in the cause from the moment of his arriving in Rome, but of course has been more than occupied lately, preparing for the opening of the Chambers; but I had his solemn word that, after to-day—”

“After to-day? Child, fool, idiot that you are! who talks of what Angelo Maturino will do after to-day?” said, or rather screamed, a little shrivelled old woman in the garb of a superior servant, who for a moment had been watching the young girls, as they sat with their arms flung round each other, and wholly unconscious of her entrance. “You,” she continued, placing herself before Leoline,—“you are the alien, the heretic, before whom his proud soul bows! You are the kinswoman of him whom *he*—” Then abruptly turning towards Adela, and throwing down a bundle she held in her hand,—“Where is Giacinto?” she said. “Don’t open your great eyes, and look so calm! but up, I tell you, and find me Giacinto, or never, never, never shall you again behold that generous, that noble boy!—and *he*, —*he* will go down to the grave, red with another deed of blood! cursed with another crime! Rise, Adela Daltoni, as you value your own soul! Where is Giacinto? Save them! save them!”

“What mean you, Barbina?” said Adela, greatly excited. “Giacinto is out of town; he cannot return till to-morrow. What do you mean, dear Barbina?” and she placed the old creature in a chair, took off her hood, and wiped her brow with her handkerchief, for it was damp and heated.

“I mean,” said Barbina, “that at noon—and it is nigh—in the Palace Court where they are all going, *he*, with his own hand—his own right arm—will cut down the boy! shed his young blood! crush out the life I reared! make stark and hideous the face that nestled here!” She crossed her arms upon her bosom and looked upward; then burst out again,—“Did I not hear it planned? Did I not see it acted? There they stood, the grim Conspirators! One was chosen for the Count Vorni,—Calusso, the monster, undertook the deed—*alone*! But the boy, *he* might make resistance; who knew not his brave spirit? One must give him a blow; it sends his head

aside, the artery is swollen, and *he* stands ready!—Up gushes the red tide! But *he* is nervous, *he* is shaken to pieces—Giacinto,—any child might stay his arm! I have kept his secrets till now, long and faithfully, through years of hatred and neglect; but I nursed the boy—I loved the boy—he is a noble boy! Oh, save him! save them both!” and fairly overcome by her own fearful vehemence, she fell back exhausted and senseless. Leoline with quick intuition gathered the whole, and opened the bundle which the old woman’s foot accidentally pushed towards her; it contained the cap and long white robe of a Dominican neophyte.

“This was doubtless intended for my page,” said Adela; “but what can we do?—he is away. Besides, a mere boy,—how by such means defeat a conspiracy—a deep and diabolical plan of murder? And if Angelo be assassinated—poor dear Fred! Oh, what *can* we do? What *can* we do?”

Whilst she was speaking, the little Welch girl was in action. Tightly and quickly were her flowing ringlets wound into a knot at the top of her head, and entirely concealed by the student's cap; then her throat was divested of its feminine adornments; and her figure, closely buttoned to the feet in the ample garment;—in a few moments the metamorphose was complete, and she might have passed muster in a calmer hour than the one whose wild uproar she was going to encounter.

“Now, dearest,” she said, with perfect composure, “your bonnet, for you must show me the way; my *fiacre* is in waiting. Do not fear, I am a *Lion* by name!”

Adela was half stupified at her promptitude, and almost mechanically obeyed. They had nearly the entire breadth of the city to traverse, a fact of which Leoline was happily ignorant; but she knew the potency of gold, and thrusting a piece into the hands of the driver, with the promise of more, should he get them in

time to see the Minister enter the chambers, the horses dashed along at full speed. As they reached the Colonna, Vorni's carriage was in sight, and, in the crowded Andrea, they fortunately managed to get immediately into its track. Then did Leoline hear the name she loved so well shouted with enthusiasm, and coupled with epithets she was but too fondly inclined to think were merited.

Angelo, the idol of a people—"their *Salvatore!*"—her heart was justified in its secret, its untold devotion, and its pulse rose to the height of her heroic task.



## CHAPTER V.

“ But there are moments which he calls his own ;  
Then, never less alone than when alone,  
Those that he loved so long, and sees no more,  
Loved, and still loved—not dead, but gone before,  
He gathers round him, and revives at will  
Scenes in his life.”

*Pleasures of Memory.*

WHEN the Lady Adela returned from the Cancellaria with her wounded friend, she found her invalid uncle not only alone, but in a state of busy excitement. The usual habit of the aged Cardinal was that of extreme apathy and indifference, contented with everything, and alive but to one strong feeling—attachment to his watchful niece ; yet a keen observer might have detected that this torpor was in a great measure artificially induced, and that beneath it there still glowed a latent

sensibility, which a trifle might arouse into life. It had, in fact, been the policy of Padre Basino, who for more than twenty years had acted as medical adviser, no less than spiritual director to his patron, to keep him, (under the pretence of warding off occasional accesses of a painful disorder,) half stupefied by powerful narcotics. By the advice of Maturin, to whom the old man had gradually become strongly attached, this system had been almost entirely discontinued ; and although the body yielded to the daily increase of age and infirmity, there seemed ground to hope that the soul might recover something of its native power, ere called upon to quit its earthly tabernacle.

When Leoline's wounded arm had been duly attended to, Adela left her housekeeper by her side, and composing, as well as she was able, her own agitated spirits, went to read as usual to the Cardinal, intending to keep him ignorant, for a time at least, of the fearful event which had just transpired. But,

to her infinite surprise, she not only found him alone, but with his chair wheeled to an ancient escritoire, and a variety of papers spread out before him, which he was in the act of attentively examining.

“ My dear Uncle,” she said, “ I have been absent, and you have needed me ! ”

“ I never need you, my child, when you are more worthily employed ; ” and he went on trying vigorously to tie up a packet of letters—a paralytic affection having rendered his hands almost powerless.

“ Allow me, Sir, to do that,” and she took the tape that was entangling his fingers ; but he motioned her aside, and seemed tenacious lest she should see the endorsement on the outermost paper, which was in a bold hand, and somewhat lengthy.

Accustomed silently to read his thoughts, and never to dispute his will, she retired to the window, and hid her face behind a book, for the contents of no book could at that

moment have engaged her harassed mind. Here she remained perfectly still for about an hour, during which he continued wholly absorbed and regardless of her presence. At length the scrutiny seemed completed, the different packets were restored to their hiding places, the spectacles taken off and laid aside, and shutting his eyes, he reclined his head on the back of his chair, and seemed lost in thought.

After a short time, Adela went to him, knelt down, as she was often in the habit of doing, and kissed his hand. Instead of the sickly smile which usually acknowledged her fondness, he now gazed upon her with a look of deep and earnest interest, stroked her smoothly banded hair, and his lips worked convulsively.

“You have been agitated by something this morning, dear Uncle ; what is it ? Did my absence annoy you ? Believe me it was unavoidable.”

“ I know it—I know all about it—all—  
all—more, perhaps, than you can tell me.”

Adela looked unfeigned surprise. It was the custom of the house to keep him ignorant of everything of a harassing nature, it being known that any violent excitement would infallibly produce an attack which must be fatal.

“ You did good ? ” he said, inquiringly.  
“ Tell me no particulars now ; but Maturin, is he—,” he stopped.

“ Unhurt, Sir.”

“ And the little girl ? ”

“ Slightly wounded only.”

“ Good again ! Tend her well, my child—  
fondly, as if she were indeed your sister. I know the worst, then. But tell me nothing now—no particulars ; and, mark me, ask no questions—seek not to know how I became advised of anything ; also, as you value your own soul, do not talk upon the subject. Whatever rumours, whatever suspicions, nay,

whatever positive information may reach you, be silent, and enforce the same prudence on all within these walls. We live in fearful times, my child, most fearful! The vials of eternal wrath are surely being poured on this wretched city; and it becomes us to pray, in humility and quietness, and with all fervour, to a gracious God, to spare each one of us to repentance. Mind what I say, *in all quietness*. For a time, we will be our own priests and confessors. The Padre is ill; let us wait his entire recovery, lest we harass him. We shall not be rejected if, unaided, we approach the throne of grace. You understand?"

Adela understood but too well, and turned very pale. How had he possibly imbibed a suspicion against the Padre? What had happened? what could have happened? The Cardinal saw her perplexity.

"My child," he said, "must pardon a little mystery for a short time—a very, very short

time; soon it will be all over." He stooped forward, and kissed her brow. "But I wish, if it can be managed without exciting his remark, not to see the Padre for a week or so. Perhaps he will not be here,—his fits have become so fierce and so frequent; but if he should come, I may be asleep,—aye, Adda? can your quick wit serve me?"

"Oh, yes, Sir, without any difficulty."

"Good! and guard that little girl,—aye?"

"With all my power! Oh, Sir, such a heroine, yet so gentle, so interesting!"

"Ha! I will see her, as soon as it is safe for her, and her uncle too; he must come. I wish he were here this instant; write to him, my child, write to him. Poor fellow! poor fellow!"

Again Adela looked amazement. If there were a human being towards whom the benevolent old man had ever been capable of harbouring an unpleasant feeling, it was his nephew, Mr. Dimsdale.

“ Another mystery, Adda,—aye? It must bide its time like the rest, and that will be short. Now, go—go, and see to *her*, and commend me to her kindly. I am strong to-day, quite strong—heed me not; only mark diligently what I say,—be entirely silent on whatever has happened, and strictly enforce silence upon others.”

\* \* \* \* \*

It was the evening of the same day, and a soothing draught had lulled Leoline into a sweet sleep. Her own maid, a niece of Mary Bell's, who had accompanied her into Italy, was beside her; and Adela, much worn, crept into her *boudoir*, and throwing herself on the sofa, endeavoured to arrange in her mind, and realise to her sense, the various and agitating events of the last few hours. But of all that had transpired, what puzzled her the most was the Cardinal's knowledge, not only of the fearful tragedy, but of Leoline's feat and domiciliation beneath his roof—since



the crone, who always attended him in her own absence, was not only forbidden, but too ignorant, to give a consecutive account of any thing. His conversation with her, too, had been most extraordinary; his energy, the deep feeling he seemed suddenly to entertain on public matters, to which he was commonly indifferent, his altered sentiment towards Mr. Dimsdale. She had read that, in some cases, the sense of life became stronger than usual, as the union of soul and body was about to be severed; and loving him as those *must* love who have received parental cares without the parental tie, the thought was painful beyond endurance; and, fairly overpowered, the poor girl wept bitterly.

She had just roused and reproached herself for self-indulgence at such a time, when there was a tap at the door, and Maturin stood before her. He was wan to ghastliness; his eye-lids drooped so as to veil all expression in his eyes; he took both her hands in his,

and seemed utterly unable to speak. Adela, woman-like, had a keen notion of his secret, and said,—

“ You would inquire after your little preserver. Dr. Carneggi has assured me it is all well ; there is not the slightest symptom of fever, and she is sleeping now like an infant.”

There was the gentlest pressure of her fingers by way of acknowledgment, but he was still mute ; he felt as if the experience and suffering of a life had been crowded into a few hours : the widow's wail and the child's sad scream still rang upon his ear, and before his eye lay, cold and stark, the murdered corpse of his noble and gifted friend ! Even his last scene, attending upon poor Fred, had had its painful interest ; for who could have beheld, unmoved, the once athletic, healthful, and joyous man reduced to a skeleton,—bruised and lacerated in every part, and half-broken in spirit !

As must have appeared more than once in

the course of our narrative, Maturin was a man of deep sensibility ; and though now on a mission of gladness, and that to a lovely and a loving woman, his voice failed him, and his whole frame trembled.

“ No fresh disaster, I trust, dear Doctor ? ” said Adela.

“ No, no, the reverse,” he said, with some difficulty, and tottered towards the sofa.

“ You are ill, very ill ! ” said Adela, hurriedly.

“ Frederic lives ! ” he whispered, and fell back faint and powerless.

## CHAPTER VI.

“The system and teaching of the Jesuits is, to expel all that is divine, to destroy all that is human, and to encourage all that is fiend-like, in the nature of man ; not to restore man to the holy image of God, but to degrade him to the standard of the devil. The end and object once fixed and determined, it suffers nothing to stand between man and the attainment of them. No falsehood too base, no hypocrisy too fruitless, no crime too flagrant, no action too unnatural and inhuman, but any and all of them will be put in practice to insure the success of the plan to be pursued.”—USBORNE.

It would be difficult to define the various feelings which agitated Maturin as he pursued his way from his hotel in the Sistina to the Palazzo Daltoni, the evening after his last interview with Leoline.

Frederic—who, thanks to the unremitting

cares of his friend and a good constitution, had nearly recovered the effects of his incarceration, had preceded him thither some hours, and already sent an intimation that Mr. Dimsdale was arrived, and "impatient," as he prettily expressed it, "to welcome his preserver, and acknowledge his future nephew."

Yes, Mr. Dimsdale's preserver, no less than Frederic's, it was true he had been; for from the moment of his arriving in Rome, despite his public duties, he had resolutely set himself to redeem the pledge given at the Plas; and it was through him, and him alone, that Mr. Dimsdale was now alive, and would not only meet his family, but meet them, in many respects, an altered man. The discovery of Frederic in his dungeon was no less at this moment a cause of self-gratulation. "Poor fellow!" he said, half aloud, "he certainly was doomed! the vital spark had nearly fled, and his murderers would have known no relenting."

As Leoline presented herself on the mental tablet, he turned into the grounds of the Barberini; *she* was identical with soft lights and evening shadows, the song of birds and whispering of winds, and not to be pursued, even by fancy, amid the din and stir of busy man. Rapidly he surveyed the few passages of his life in which her image mingled—rapturously he recalled those in which his influence over her had been so fortuitously manifested. A witchery overspread every time, every place, every circumstance with which he could connect her; and if one moment she rose to his soul the very ideal of all beauty and all truth, the next she appealed to his sense the incarnation of heroic daring and feminine tenderness.

And how changed was he himself since his association with her, brief and broken as that association had been! He felt as if, by a sudden yet unconscious effort, he had bounded into a new being,—acquired energies, faculties,

sentiments unknown before, and against the force of which all difficulties had implicitly given way. Educated for the cloister, yet during the last few weeks had he not been the dispenser of almost sovereign power? Alienated from general society as much by taste as by habit, he had moved notwithstanding in the most accomplished circles—the idol of women and the envy of men. Still further, with a frame naturally delicate, he had endured toil without remission, for eighteen hours out of every twenty-four; and, with a manner devoid of the slightest tincture of subtlety or tact, he had succeeded in fathoming men's minds, and controlling their wills, to an extent that would have made Machiavelli for ever forswear his creed.

It could not be in himself this power; it must be something extrinsic, something apart from the man, Angelo Maturin; he was merely the coarse conductor of some higher, purer soul—and Leoline was that soul! Yes,

it was through her that he had arrived at a keener perception of all that is wise and noble, just and holy ; and through her loving spirit it was, that his own yearned with a fondling and child-like sensibility towards all who struggled and all who sighed—all who fought, though ever so feebly, the good fight of faith—all who responded, however faintly, to human sympathy.

He had just emerged from a thick grove of ilex, and stood contemplating in the basin of a now silent fountain the reflection of a bright star, the only one which shone forth in the twilight hour ; it seemed suggestive, for he uncovered his head, folded his arms upon his chest, and resigned himself to a fit of abstraction as calmly as if no lady-love had existed, and no engagement to meet her been pending. Suddenly he started, clasped his hands convulsively together, and an expression of perfect anguish overspread his countenance. The question of his childhood



had suddenly occurred, and with all its force, the thrilling, bitter question,—“Who am I? What signifies,” he ejaculated, “all I may do—all I may dare? *She* has wealth, position, an untainted name; *I* am a renegade priest from an abhorred Church,—a pitiful, penniless adventurer—without a home, without a tie in the world; and I have had the meanness, the madness to plant myself in her young heart,—to be to her a thing which, whilst she breathes, she never can forget, or forgive! Base poltroon!”

As he recovered and looked around, he found the day fast closing—and gathering up his hat and cane, walked rapidly on towards his destination. By the time he reached the high dim walls of the Daltoni, the traces of passion had disappeared; he had again buckled on the armour of an upright mind and a determined will.

“At all events,” he muttered to himself, “I have been more sinned against than sin-

ning: the old Padre has always led me to believe I was not utterly base-born. I will have another fight with him yet; and come what may, whilst life endures, will hand the cup of happiness to others, though it be destined never to touch my own lips. Onward! onward! To look back is old age, whilst every moment of life is a fresh surprise!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Had the cloud lain even heavier than it did upon our hero's heart, it must have been dispersed by the reception which awaited him in the *salon* of the Palazzo. Mr. Dimsdale met him at the door, and wrung his hand with true British cordiality. Frederic danced round him to display his recovered agility, and threatened him with a French embrace.

Adela's large eyes swam in tears as she bade him kindly welcome, and Leoline's silent timidity was no less expressive to a lover of the satisfaction *she* derived from his presence. Still, the dinner passed over heavily

—the subject-matter of each one's thought was of too grave a nature for general discussion, and yet by none could it be dismissed.

During the pauses, Maturin found his eye wandering to the sylph-like figure by his side, much oftener than either prudence or resolution approved. Leoline was simply attired in transparent white muslin ; her ringlets floated with their old careless wildness over her neck ; and her wounded arm, released from its support, was merely bound in a black velvet cincture, which, from the contrast to its own hue, might have been adopted as an ornament. There was a delicacy about her generally—a faint yet living glow upon her cheek—which, in association with the cause of her recent sufferings, affected him painfully, and he could almost have hailed a thunder-storm or an earthquake that would have broken the spell. To the contemplation of his queen-like Adela, Frederic resigned himself with no such

struggle. Her dress was plain but costly; a gown of deep blue Genoese velvet, clasped at the throat with a pearl brooch—a spray of pearls on one side of her head—and a miniature of her mother set in diamonds on her arm. There was on this occasion a thoughtfulness about her, which spiritualised her extreme beauty, together with a quiet dignity, and an instinctive propriety in the execution of her little duties as hostess; and Fred was seriously debating whether, hereafter, he should call her Juno or Di, when Spitfire, who was at his usual post under his chair, darted to the window and began barking furiously. Frederic looked at Maturin.

“Do you know the meaning of that?” Maturin shook his head. “There must be a personage on the terrace, whom I suspect he often encountered down yonder, for he scents and salutes him a mile off. That same personage followed him up the Sistina the other night, and commenced kicking

him brutally, just under my window ; luckily, I had a jug of boiling water on the table, which I lost no time in sending on his head. He has only crept out with the owls since, and will bear the brand, I guess, for some time to come."

Meaning glances were exchanged round the table, but the subject was not pursued, and a message from the Cardinal to his niece caused the speedy retirement of both ladies, contrary to the refined custom of the country, which acknowledges, in the social hour, no sex in souls. The trio drew their chairs nearer together, and the Rechabite Maturin positively filled himself a second bumper of claret.

" Bravo, old boy ! " said Frederic, with all the joyousness of former days ; " why, we shall make a jolly fellow of you yet ! Gad ! I'd drink a butt of this stuff at a sitting, to see you ensconced Lord Bishop of St. Asaph ; for ecclesiastic you *must* be,—born so,—and you would look so well in right proper English

canonicals! Aye, Sir," turning to Mr. Dimsdale, "do you think we can ever manage it? His light can never be hid under a bushel. But there must be a bit of interest, too, in our land of the free,—a *wee* push from a man in power. I'll tell you how it must be; you shall get into parliament!"—Mr. Dimsdale turned up his eyes.—"Don't faint, Sir, but listen! Again, I say, you shall get into parliament; but you shall have no trouble. *I'll* do all the dirty work, to say nothing of the clean. *I'll* rout up the electors; *I'll* drive you to the hustings; you shall be taken ill, and *I'll* make your speech for you. You are returned, of course, by an overwhelming majority, but are too poorly to be chaired. The business is done. The old boy here shall put his wits to work; write down all the clever things he can about the Church—all the Churches; a tip at reform, you know; then, arrange it '*bill*' fashion. What a measure it would come out! Sir, you'd be the greatest

statesman of the age ! Peel, Russell, Cobden, hide your diminished heads ! Or, if our venerable mother be not yet tired of the squabbling of her children, and *will* let her house be pulled over her ears, rather than put it in order, we will have a filtration of the Thames ! Our friend there, like the immortal sage of Fleet-street, may be compared to the trunk of an elephant,—

“ ‘It could pick pins, and yet possess’d the vigour  
For trimming well the jacket of a tiger.’ ”

What say you, Sir ; how shall we do it ? ”

Mr. Dimsdale looked amused, and was about to reply, when Maturin, taking up his glass, said, “ I have transgressed my usual rule to-day, for the pleasure, Sir, of congratulating you on your improved health, and to express a sincere hope that you may never experience a relapse. Fred, my dear friend, eternal oblivion of ‘ Liberal Societies,’ and *il*-liberal bills of fare.”

“ ‘ No more of that, Hal, an’ thou lov’st me,’ ” said Fred ; and throwing up the window, he walked out upon the terrace.

“ Thank you, Doctor,” said Mr. Dimsdale ; “ I thank you from my heart ! But thanks are poor when I think of all I owe you. And, now we are alone,”—he looked rather nervously towards the window, which Maturin rose and closed,—“ thank you again—now we are alone, may I ask you, how and by what means you became possessed of a clue to the writer of those letters ? What is the name of the scoundrel, who for so many years has poisoned every enjoyment, nay, sapped my very existence ? ”

Maturin drew his chair still closer. “ We had better speak low,” he said ; “ and first, let me ask, can you remember, when you were in Italy before, any man whom you thwarted by any chance ? No matter how trivial the cause,—the competition for a picture, a difference of opinion warmly maintained,—above all, a



woman's smile? In this country, the principle of revenge may slumber, but it *never dies*."

"No. I have tried, of course, a thousand times, and a thousand upon that; but my sojourn was so short, my relations so simple, it is impossible. I came here with my brother, on his wedding tour. We were introduced to this family, and I fell in love, headlong, with the niece of the house, who stood in precisely the same position the Lady Adela does now, and was very like her moreover. Almost the only person I spoke to, besides her and the Cardinal, (for I was brought up in a strange way, and morbid to sheepishness,) was a young Count Nasibo, a sort of connexion who was always hanging about when I first came; but I had very little intercourse even with him; he was a perfect *roué*, though a mere boy, and poor as a mouse."

"Had he made any pretensions to the lady's favour?"

“ He had presumed to annoy her ; and one reason,—indeed, the ostensible one for our marrying somewhat precipitately,—was to rid her of the nuisance ; the real one might be my own impatience, for I was distractedly attached. He disappeared immediately afterwards ; went to see after some pretended estates belonging to his family in the North, (he had spent every *rap*,) and no more was heard of him. We remained with the Cardinal at his urgent request. He was then suffering the first inroads of the disease which has preyed upon him ever since, and Nina was essential to his comfort. My brother was taken seriously ill at Naples, some months after our marriage, and his life was despaired of : for a long time he was not in a situation to travel, and his young wife in an agony of terror, and near her *accouchement* also,—I had no alternative —”

He stopped ; his lip quivered, and his brow and cheek assumed a livid whiteness.

“ I know the rest, Sir, pretty nearly ; do not agitate yourself. What did you tell me was the name of that young Count ? ”

“ Nasibo. I had entirely forgotten it and him, but found the name whilst dressing for dinner this very day, in a book of my poor wife’s, which was lying in a cupboard in my room—it was a Breviary, and his gift.”

Maturin took out a pencil and paper, wrote the word, transposed it, and showed it to Mr. Dimsdale.

“ Basino ! ” he exclaimed ; “ good God ! is it possible ? ”

“ There is no longer a doubt,” said Angelo ; “ you have supplied me with the only clue of which I stood in need.”

“ But why, for what inconceivable reason, has he pursued me with such malignity ? I wronged him not. He never could have married Nina, had he been rich and a man of character, for she loathed,—detested him.”

“ But no woman would have made him believe that :—he is a man of inordinate self-love and self-estimation ; with ambition, moreover, and a cool perseverance in the pursuit of an object which would mock all ordinary calculation. I could imagine, that if he had ever formed an attachment that was unsuccessful in its result, no matter why, he would hunt to the death all whom he fancied had obstructed it,—even the lady herself. From that moment, hatred and revenge would not merely enter his heart,—they would eat into it,—corrode the very well-springs of his existence. It has been the same, you see, with opposition in politics, which he had adopted with all the fervour of a passion. I was regarded by him, as you know, with almost feminine tenderness, till I shewed greater deference to my own conscience than his mandates ; and then I was only borne with till the fit moment arrived, when my life was held as cheap as a dog’s, for, with a band

of sworn bravoos at his command, he yet chose to strike with his own arm."

Mr. Dimsdale shuddered. "It was really he, then?" he inquired.

"He has a limp when he is tired or agitated, which no disguise can conceal, and the assassin sidled away, as only Basino could. I saw the movement distinctly, and caught his eye too; and my fate is, therefore, only deferred."

"My dear fellow, you must not stay here! You must return with us, and that directly; we have arranged already a little plan, to which Fred's rhodomontade was a kind of prelude. I have driven him half wild by telling him that, in a pecuniary point of view, I shall make no difference between my *nephews*."

He emphasised the last word strongly. Maturin interrupted him:—

"You are generous, Sir, and kind,—*very kind!* and I regret deeply that circum-

stances should have made me forget, even for a moment, the propriety, the necessity there was, that you should know who the individual might be whom you could accept in that relation. I reproach myself, believe me, for giving way to *feeling*, when respect to the dear little sufferer, honour to you—all should have held me mute.”

“ Doctor, we accept you, one and all, upon your own merits—merits which, by a train of strange and unaccountable incidents, we have individually both tested and been benefited by: character, is the best patent of nobility. Lady Adela’s fortune will be so ample, that I put Leoline on an equality with her brother, whenever I have the happiness of placing her hand in yours. Frederic would most willingly give up all to you, but I am sure I shall answer your wishes best by the decision I have made.”

Maturin felt a choking sensation in his throat, which prevented his replying imme-

diately; he was, in fact, overpowered by the openness, no less than the generosity of a man, usually so reserved in his feelings and haughty in his bearing as Mr. Dimsdale. The course he meant to adopt was decided, but he scarcely knew how even to waive overtures, made in a spirit at once noble and confiding. There is, however, a secret and magnetic action in the moral, no less than the natural world; and minds imbued with the fine principle of honour, draw near to one another with a sympathy as silent, as strong, and as true, as that which unites the senseless iron to the no less senseless loadstone. After a brief pause, therefore, he looked earnestly at Mr. Dimsdale, and said,—

“I can conceive, Sir, that under the *very* peculiar circumstances which have brought us into our present relative position, you would show indulgence—that, boasting an ancient and untainted descent yourself, you might yet, perhaps, overlook mere mediocrity of

origin in me. But, if this be my native soil, as Basino most positively asserts it is, there is a worse contingency hangs over me than this; for aught I know, my birth may be connected with crime, with dishonour, and the mystery thrown around it have been a veil of mercy. I have now, in mastering your little affairs with the potent Padre, left a clear field for the prosecution of my own. I shall see him the first opportunity, and force a revelation of my parentage and prospects, and according to the tenor of that revelation must my future course be guided. Before my *wife*, I must stand fearless,—vital, and erect; and such a being as Miss Dimsdale must not be associated, however remotely, with shame.”

“ You are chivalric, Doctor ! ”

“ Comprehensible then, Sir, to one whose ancestors fought in Palestine ! With your good leave, we will defer this subject for the present, and resume that from which we have somewhat



unaccountably run away. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Dimsdale, your married life was disturbed by suspicions—groundless, I am aware, but still—”

“You are right,—those detestable letters commenced even then,—in fact, an infamous imputation on my wife formed the staple of the first I received. It was my habit at the time to make occasional pedestrian excursions into the vicinity of Rome, and I was given to understand that these absences were taken advantage of by a favoured lover. Maddened at the thought, I was base enough to watch my Nina’s movements, and tracked her one evening, about this hour, to the little temple you may have seen in the grounds, and there found an Austrian officer, enveloped in a horseman’s cloak, waiting to receive her. In my agitation, I so stationed myself that I could not hear them; but on parting, I saw them embrace one another in the most familiar and affectionate manner, and felt as

most men would feel in such a position, though a little more warmly, perhaps, than an Italian husband. She believed I was at Tivoli; and as I could not have encountered her and commanded my passion, I thought it best to keep out of her sight until I had arrived at an absolute certainty of her guilt. There was a secret door in the Colfiorito, leading to a subterranean passage which ended, Heaven knows where; here I concealed myself, and I believe never moved a muscle, from the moment I lay down till the following evening, when they were to meet again. As his heavy tread the next night announced his arrival, and her silvery voice almost at the same instant, proclaimed her eager punctuality, I am sure, if they had listened, they might have heard my heart beat. But imagine the idiot I felt myself when I distinctly recognised in the stranger's voice that of her brother, the father of Adela, who, employed in a secret mission from the court of Vienna, would not be seen by his

uncle's domestics, and sought this means of an interview with his only sister, whom he idolized. When I returned from my travels, she was distressed at my haggard appearance; but you may be sure I kept my own counsel, and could have expired with shame when she told me of José's stolen visits, and how much she regretted I was not at home to have seen him.

My tormentor, I presume, never knew that I had been undeceived, for this has formed the basis of all his subsequent epistles. In some, I was told that the knowledge of my suspicions had brought on fever, and was the cause of her death; in others, that I had reproached her, undermined her religious faith, and not only sent her prematurely out of this world, but condemned her, past all reprieve, to torture in the next. In all, I have most unhesitatingly been reputed her murderer, and the murderer of my son—my son whom, God knows, I would have given my life to save!”

“ Was your son, Sir, stated to have been still-born ? ”

“ Decidedly not ; and there came another engine for torture. In compliance with my known wishes, it was said she persisted in nourishing her child ; so the disease that destroyed one, of course did not spare the other.”

“ On your return, then, both were gone ? ”

“ Both ; I was apprised of nothing till the grave had closed over them—and it is remarkable that the Cardinal, who had before always been courteous and kind, treated me now as if I had really been guilty of the enormities afterwards imputed to me. There had been a disappointment on his part certainly, that his niece had not married a person of *status* in this country, for she was exquisitely beautiful, and he meant to have endowed her largely ; but when he was brought to understand what would be her position in England, he withdrew all opposition, and her devoted attach-

ment to myself, and entire happiness, completely reconciled him afterwards. I always attributed the change to the influence of a priest, who, I heard, had been installed in the house the day of poor Nina's funeral. I never saw this personage, for, devoured by grief at her loss—torn by remorse at having left her when such a crisis was approaching—and innocent of everything but an insane idolatry of her—I left precipitately, and by what fatuity I have allowed accusations so groundless, to disturb my peace of mind for so many years, is one of those enigmas it would puzzle us to solve. The main worry, perhaps, has arisen from these letters having always displayed an intimate acquaintance with my most private affairs, nay, I might almost say, my very thoughts. They have pointed, too, at a deep and settled plan of vengeance in store; and, I assure you, there was a time when I never tasted food without a fear of poison, or walked in my own woods

without listening for the stealthy step of an assassin."

"And by what authority," asked Maturin, "or in what character, did this correspondent, who seems to have combined in himself the office of judge, jury, and executioner, claim to arraign your actions?"

"Sometimes as a friend—and then I had long exhortations to join the Romish Church, the only communion, he assured me, that opened its arms to the wretched, and in which the wretched found peace; sometimes he wrote as an enemy, and the avenger of my poor Nina; then he had neither haven nor heaven for me, and scarcely a hell—but my weakness has been inconceivable!"

"Not at all, my dear Sir; there has always been a spy about you in Wales—and there were means used to undermine your health, as there have subsequently been measures taken to destroy your life."

"It is impossible! I had, I confess, an

idea of the kind once, and my sister-in-law discharged every servant we had."

"Very likely, and might have discharged ten sets, and yet a Jesuit, with a purpose in view, would always have had one in pay: That this was the case I am prepared to prove, were it necessary, no less than the whole of what I am now going to reveal. Padre Basino, at the time of your marriage—the wild, but young and handsome Count Nasibo—was passionately devoted to your wife; and, had you not come in the way, would most likely so have pruned down his excesses, modelled his conduct, and persevered in his suit, as ultimately to have overcome the lady's repugnance, and borne off the prize. Your union put this out of the question; and he took to his bosom two mistresses, Ambition and Revenge, and has never for a single day deserted their service. He entered the Church, and took the oaths of the Society of Jesus, and thenceforward public aims and private

malice went steadily side by side. You shook the faith of your wife in the Romish doctrines, I believe ? ”

“ Decidedly, I did ; she saw the folly of them before we were married, and was prepared for a formal reception into our Church as soon as we should take up our abode in England.”

“ That would be a sufficient sanction to the Society for persecuting you. Nothing is more bitterly avenged than the seduction of a soul ; but, have you not been moved to join the ranks yourself ? ”

“ Incessantly.”

“ Yes, and had you done so, in a temporal point of view, you would have escaped, perhaps, a good deal—but, since you were obstinate, it became a legitimate object to get possession of your estates.”

“ Impossible ! ”

“ Nothing more feasible ;—have you forgotten your bodily sufferings at the Plas ? ”



“ No, indeed, nor ever shall I.”

“ There are various ways of destroying men besides absolute and bare-faced murder. Did you ever feel a disposition to commit suicide ? ”

Mr. Dimsdale turned pale, and shuddered as he said,—“ Again and again, but at moments only—moments of intense and unutterable anguish ; and I thank my God—most devoutly and constantly do I thank my God—that He always restored my reason in time,—just in time.”

“ The state of mind in which you were kept, by those diabolical letters, would have a direct tendency to affect seriously the digestive process, and this derangement, falling on a morbidly nervous temperament, would in time induce disease. Your sleeplessness and other sufferings arose from a frequent but little suspected cause of human agony,—irritation of the membranes connected with the brain : this would shortly have become actual

turgescence of the vessels, and resulted finally either in a desperate act of madness, or a fit of apoplexy. Now, see how we call good evil, and evil good. Your sister's death struck upon your sense as an irremediable evil ; yet, under the mercy and wisdom of God, it was but the sword of the cherubim which warned you from destruction."

Mr. Dimsdale clasped his hands, and bent down his head,—“True, most true !” he murmured.

“The aim of the body,” continued Maturin, “of which Basino was the agent, pointed, as I have said, to your estates. It was a great oversight on your part not to buy Glaslyn ; for, having obtained this, they coveted its surroundings as a matter of course. You were not a person to sell or to alienate, and in Basino's hands were not likely to live for ever. Still, you had a nephew and niece, and that was awkward. But mark ! your nephew is fond of horses,—do you remember

a hair-breadth escape he had at Oxford about a year ago?"

"Perfectly."

"The man of whom he hired the Fireking (rightly named was the vicious beast) was in pay, and it was from him he bought his Black Di, I think?"

"Yes, certainly."

"And by his recommendation he hired his present groom?"

"Precisely."

"And Black Di has thrown him twice, and will throw him till she kill him, if he persist in riding her. I begged him again and again to shoot her before I knew all this. You must see to it when you return."

"But, my dear Doctor, you don't mean to say we are always to be subject to this kind of thing. Better migrate to the antipodes—better discharge a pistol through one's brains at once—than live in perpetual suspicion of servants and fear of our life."

“It will end,—I will end it; I have the means. But I trust I have shown you how interlaced and articulated is the web which may envelop families or individuals, when they offer, at once, spoil for a vicious and irresponsible community, and a *pabulum* to private passion. It is inconceivable the extent to which this is carried on in the Romish Church, and more particularly by that body who are the purveyors, as it were, to the *ménagerie*—the astute jackals to the powerful and voracious lion.”

“But in England, still less in dissenting Wales,” inquired Mr. Dimsdale, “what object can they have in seeking a settlement there?”

“A profound one. They are working quietly and stealthily now; but in a few years, if tolerated so long, they will have their establishments in every part of Britain, and a regular hierarchy. After that, let the nation look to itself. Basino has been, for a long time, in active correspondence with men of

the highest standing in your political circles ; and five-and-twenty such men as he, with a competent staff, would convert half your population."

"How lost, how besotted I was, to let that bit of mountain slip through my fingers ! Louisa did hint at the desirableness of the purchase ; but I thought she was keeping rather too strict an eye upon her son's interests, and I became the victim of a silly and unworthy suspicion. But who could have foreseen ?"

"Ah ! you little suspected the despised Nasibo of former days was the bidder. You had no idea your worst enemy, under the garb of a private gentleman, pedestrianising through Wales with his fishing-rod and his wallet, was noticing your every movement, learning your every thought, exulting in your every pang !"

"But how is it all to end, Doctor ? Are there no means of punishing the scoundrel ?

Are our lives always to be held upon his sufferance?"

"How could one of his murderous or other acts be brought to the proof, even supposing that, in this city, justice would be administered upon proof? It so happens that a duplicate of one of your letters fell into my hands, amongst some papers I received from Basino, but that would not constitute him the writer of them all, or even of that one. Again, we know to a certainty that deleterious drugs were insinuated into your food at Naples; but here you are alive, therefore, were not poisoned by them. The attempt upon Miss Dimsdale proved equally abortive; and though Frederic could swear to his identity with the man who stood by, and commanded his own capture, yet Frederic was a conspirator against the government, and amenable to the laws. But, even supposing a case could be made out, a priest is subject only to the canon code; and what would be worthy capital punishment in an

ordinary individual, must positively be committed *twice over* before an ecclesiastic is pronounced a criminal."

"It is monstrous! it is abominable! But what are we to do? which way are we to turn?"

"You will be wise, my dear Sir, to steer your course homewards as soon as possible. Fred will be sure to get into trouble if he stay here; that was a most imprudent trick in him, pouring the hot water on Basino the other night. The temptation was great, no doubt, but it caused the fit I witnessed, and which threatened for a time to prove the last. Your best safety will be in silence and in flight."

"But we are not safe, it seems, at home!"

"I think you will be, henceforth. These terrible convulsions are now become of such frequent recurrence with the Padre, that there will no longer be the mind or the strength for strategy; he feels humbled, too, by the loss of self-command they have caused, a quality

which has always helped him largely in his mischievous schemes. After proving to him, as I shall do at our next interview, that, setting aside all matters connected with you and yours, I hold him completely in my power, I shall advise him to withdraw to some retreat, and disembarass himself of worldly cares."

"Not to Glaslyn, for the love of Heaven!"

"No danger! he has a tendency to asthma, one cause of his amazing cerebral excitement, and the climate would kill him in a month. But somewhere he must go. He cannot continue entirely alone in a long loft—for his dwelling is no better—and his old governante has never made her appearance since she absconded on the fatal fifteenth."

"She it was, I believe, who made my little girl such a heroine."

"It was, indeed, and for something dearer than life I stand indebted to the old lady. But, list! there is Spitfire furious, and Fred in view-halloo. They have hunted out Basino,



and mischief will come of it to a certainty."

He threw up the window, leant over the baluster of the terrace, and found he was but too correct in his conjectures. The priest had escaped by his own private gate, and was limping at full speed across the campagna. He watched him a few moments, then saw him stop, stagger, and fall heavily on the ground. He knew the cause, and it always sickened him to witness those appalling exacerbations. He revolted, too, from a being no less morally vile and loathsome—a being stained with the guilt of the blackest crimes; but yet, to him he had been a parent. Moreover, was it for man to carp and to judge, when the hand of God might at that moment be stretched forth to destroy?

In truth, Maturin paused not a second; he leapt down into the garden at the hazard of his neck, cleared the lawn at a few bounds, nearly prostrated Fred, who endeavoured to

prevent another saltatory display, was over the haw-haw in a moment, supported the contorted sufferer with the tenderness of a woman, and, on the return of consciousness, led him slowly and cautiously to the Negroni.

## CHAPTER VII.

"His eyes are closed, but not in sleep;  
He hears the plashing of the deep;  
He counts the waves as, hand in hand,  
They greet by turn the answering land,  
Till far away along the coast  
The murmur of their voice is lost:  
And then another rank draws nigh,  
To rise, to falter, and to die.  
Thus human hopes, in many a train,  
Flow with the tide to ebb again;  
Thus human hearts high dreams have nursed,  
To rise, to swell, and then—to burst."

REV. JAMES BANDINEL.

THE moon had withdrawn her beams, and the night was cold and chilly, when Basino, partially recovered from his 'attack, and leaning heavily on Maturin's arm, the couple slowly made their way to the dismal abode in the Negroni. As they groped up the narrow stair-

case, and, stumbling over various impediments in the passage, at length reached the door of the apartments, the young man's heart sank within him—so oppressive was the gloom of the place, and so revolting, at the present moment, this forced and intimate association with a man of whose diabolic practices he had no longer a doubt. Having struck a light, the scene of confusion in the sitting-room baffled description. In spite of the eccentric habits of the Padre, Barbina had always contrived to keep up a degree of order and cleanliness about him ; but now, dust had accumulated on every article and in every corner, whilst the mingled fumes, arising from the escape of all kinds of chemical gases, formed an atmosphere hardly to be surpassed in the Ghetto itself. The disappearance of this functionary had doubtless contributed, in no small degree, to the increased frequency of her master's attacks ; for being ignorant of her treachery, no less than her whereabouts, a vague fear that she had come

to harm, harassed his mind, whilst the want of her accustomed services increased the acerbity of his temper.

"It is of no use," he said to Angelo, who, having placed him shivering and helpless in his leathern chair, was endeavouring to raise a fire, with some coke and the scraps of paper he could collect on the floor; "it is of no use—never mind! As well die of cold as anything else! Go back—leave me!—wrap yourself in luxury—eat, drink, flatter, lie; such is the world, and you are of it!"

"I enjoyed a dinner to-day," said Maturin, "certainly, but it is some time since I was equally in the mood to do so: for the rest, il Padre has uttered what no one else would dare, and what I am happy to say, even he could not establish."

Basino did not answer; he seemed to be slowly recovering his faculties; the angry expression faded gradually from his countenance, and his eye followed the young man's move-

ments with a sort of involuntary look of interest and affection. Angelo went quietly on with his operations, and at length succeeded in getting some hot water, with which he tempered the fiery spirit, that, left to himself, the Padre would have swallowed undiluted and in frightful excess. He then set to work to restore something like general order and comfort; for it seemed the practice of the priest to cast things aside when done with, and by no chance to restore them again to their proper places. In a short time, the ragged books of reference were on their accustomed shelves, jars and bottles restored to their cupboards, and alembics and retorts, kettles of all shapes, ladles, plates, and odd things innumerable, consigned to a congenial obscurity. When nothing more remained to be done, and the patient seemed to have recovered, he took up his hat to depart; but Basino looked at him like one awoke out of a troubled sleep, took his hand and held it in both his own, began to speak, then checked

himself, turned again towards the fire, at which he had been gazing abstractedly, and large tears rolled one after another down his furrowed cheeks. Maturin would as soon have expected a symptom of sensibility from the closed and marble orbs of the bust of Zeno before him as from those of his iron-nerved patron, and he was both amazed and bewildered.

"Sit down," said Basino, as he released his hand, "sit down!" and Angelo drew a chair near, and waited nervously. The Padre poured out half-a-tumbler of *eau-de-vie*, and swallowed it at a draught. "No harm," said he, in reply to Angelo's look of horror—"used to it, and you would do the same, or worse, to exorcise such a demon. We are all virtuous till we are tried—virtuous! Ha—ha!

"The natural laws," said Maturin, "can never be transgressed with impunity, and a terrible vengeance awaits excess."

"But who would not bear the worst that can befall the body, whilst a moral injury remains to

be avenged? Think you I would live to be scorned, insulted, hunted down like a wild beast, hated and neglected by those on whom I have showered benefits, an object of loathing even to myself, if I had not a purpose?—and that purpose is—revenge!”

“Hush, Sir, hush! no man, least of all a minister of Christ, should harbour such thoughts.”

“A minister of Christ! Tut! As the man forswears the creed of the child, so the world is outgrowing the fables of nonage. I have told you before, and I tell you again, we are merely carrying on a peddling trade with the remnants of tradition—Catholic and Protestant both alike—and we carry it on for our own advantage, solely. A Church has *power*, and a Church, like every other association of vile humanity, loves power—clings to it—grasps it—and *will* grasp it to the last in the death-struggle which shortly awaits her. There is an unreality in all religious teaching of the present



day ; the teachers *know* it, and the taught *feel* it. Were it not so, would your Bible-loving England foster an hierarchy revelling in pluralities, sensualities, and selfishness ? Would she contain a population bound hand and foot at the shrine of Mammon, recognising self-interest as a rule of conduct, and, by a miserable compromise with conscience, indulging in a Sybaritic ease, with sin-stricken, heart-worn misery choking her thoroughfares ? No, no, Angelo ; put your saints in one scale, and your sinners in the other, and you would soon see which would kick the beam. I have been wronged, and my wretched existence is only prolonged that I may avenge myself."

"Retribution is surely, Sir, the work of higher wisdom than ours ; even history teaches us that."

"History teaches *me*, that the men of deep calculation, quick resource, and large *will-power*, were the men who were intended to subjugate and to rule their fellows. Why should the

qualities which made Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, Napoleon, immortal, be infamous in a narrower sphere? You are young, and I wish not to disturb your dreams, but your mind is too acute and too active to rest on its present convictions; *one* fierce gust of passion will shake it to its foundations. Had I never loved, I had never hated; and had I never hated, I had never doubted. I sought in the cowl a refuge from feelings that paralysed my very heart-strings, and I found, when I awoke from my trance, the means ready prepared to avenge me of mine adversary."

"And have those means never failed you? have you always succeeded in your aims?" He looked closely and inquiringly at the Padre.

"What know you of my aims, Sir?" he answered fiercely; "did I ever prate of my aims or my sufferings to *boys*?"

"Not to me, certainly; yet it may have so happened, that circumstances should have given me a glance at both; nay, that I could

at this moment tell you it is an imaginary wrong you have nursed so many years—an innocent adversary whom you have providentially been foiled in injuring.”

“Then it is as I suspected,” he said fiercely; “and it is you, Angelo Maturin, who have crawled into my secrets, and now plume yourself on having betrayed them! Sainthly hypocrite!”

“Hold, Sir!” and Maturin’s eyes shot fire; “I bear such language from no man! If you wish to hear, and can listen with rational calmness, I will tell you all I know, how I came to know it, and the means by which an overruling Providence enabled me to defeat your insane machinations. Shall I speak?” The Padre nodded, his lips worked convulsively; unknown to himself, Maturin had a wonderful command over him. Maturin resumed,—“The grand disappointment of your life, Padre, was the marriage of the woman you had set your affections upon with another.

Whether you were deceived, or simply self-deceiving, I know not; but you fancied she loved you—”

“And she did—she did!” exclaimed the Padre passionately, and rose from his seat. “Villain! liar! whatever you are, do not dare to tell me that Nina Daltoni loved that idiot she married! she was mine, and mine only; and it was lies, treachery, cunning that made her his—the fiend!”

Maturin did not trust himself to glance at the terrific countenance before him, but rising, he laid his hand on the priest’s arm, and said calmly,—“I will not allow you to excite yourself in this way, Sir; it is injurious to you, and my temper is impetuous. Will you be more composed, or shall I leave you?”

“Go on, but don’t repeat that lie!—don’t or I’ll fell you down—there where you stand,—on my own hearth!”

Maturin could have smiled at the bravado, but he carefully maintained his equanimity of

look and manner, and in a steady voice continued :—"For the supposed injury of this marriage, you have persecuted Mr. Dimsdale with letters ; and in those letters you have accused him of conduct, of which no man living would be less capable than himself. It was by accident I caught the superscription of one of these; and disguised as it was, recognised your autograph instantly; had any doubt remained on my mind, it was dispelled by a rough draught of one having formed an envelope to a packet from your own hands." The priest started. "Your incaution, Sir," resumed Maturin, "rested not here;" he took up a volume which lay on a shelf near him. "This book was upon the table the evening of my arrival in Rome, and when, sorely against my will, I was detained two long hours in this room in solitary confinement,"—he turned to a place in the volume, which opened almost spontaneously, and held it to the Padre.—"Having there discovered," he said, "the

victim, the bane, and the antidote, you cannot wonder at the failure of your schemes."

Basino turned very pale, and large drops started on his forehead. Maturin watched the conflict, and waited for the result, and he was not a little surprised at a loud burst of laughter; but it was hollow laughter, and unreal.

"So, most astute of philosophers and charitable of Christian priests," he exclaimed, when he had exhausted his mirth, "a notable mare's nest truly you have discovered. You pick up a book in my study on the science of poisons—a book of which, as a chemist, I have made large use, and interlined with my own discoveries and antidotes. Against one page you find the letters G. D., which in your wisdom you take to signify George Dimsdale. Ingenious, certainly! very ingenious! I do honour to your acumen!" and he bowed ironically, at the same time throwing the volume with some violence upon the table.

But Maturin was not to be daunted; he had a point to gain—a point on which hinged hope and happiness, and the lives of those who were dear to him; he quietly, therefore, took up the book, and again pointed out a page to the Padre; it contained the climax of death-potions, and was marked Count G. “The valet of Count Gaspino,” he said, “was my servant in Paris, and from a trifling cause became devotedly attached to me. When you left his master, the day on which that master died, instead of quitting the city, according to his instructions, he flew to me, and is, with the Count’s money and jewels, at this moment in my keeping. He and the infamous Boldero are both ready to betray you; thus far I have controlled them—one, through his devoted attachment to myself, the other, by bribes. Are you regardless of their power? Are you willing to defy it?”

A visible tremor now seized the Padre, and his countenance turned livid. “He will

have it!" he muttered hoarsely, "he drives me to desperation; but—but—it must be; it must! Angelo," he said aloud, "look at me—look at all that surrounds me! Does your eye alight on healthful, active middle age? on an abode of comfort, or even of decency? No, you see premature decrepitude, and a den fit for a dog. Yet you know my talents, my industry, my opportunities of advancement: must there not be some deep reason, some heart-stirring cause for the selection I have made? Speak, Angelo—speak!"

"Your conduct, Sir, has always been an enigma to me."

"An enigma! yes. You think I have no feeling."

"Far from it; you have had too much; it has been feeling,—but feeling, unchastened by holy influences, which has led you to the commission of what you inwardly abhor—what, at this hour, you would fain forget!"

"I *have felt*, indeed! Boy, I have *felt*,



till I was fire, and I have *felt*, till I am stone!" he threw out his arms, and his body oscillated slowly to and fro.

Maturin feared he might fall, and placed himself by his side. There was a fearful history in those last words, and he almost reproached himself for the part he had acted. The Padre looked at him fixedly for a minute or two, and tears gathered in his eyes. All at once he threw his arm upon his shoulder, and leaned heavily.

"Compose yourself, Sir," said Maturin kindly; "I have entire power over those who might betray you. Grant me one little condition, and no harm, believe me, shall ever happen to you for the past."

"Harm! what care I for aught that man can do unto me! the harm is done, the only harm that could affect *me*. You think I have lived to plot and to plan merely to gratify my *hate*. It is true, I have hated—hated with an intensity no words can express, no heart

but my own conceive. And why? I had loved with equal or greater vehemence; I had loved with my soul. It was an angel, too, I loved; and she was torn from me by treachery, deceit, and lies!—Could flesh and blood endure it? No, both recoiled, and the day that I intended to have made her mine—mine in the face of men and angels—that day she stood before the altar, and calmly gave herself to another; and that day saw me prostrated to the earth—gasping, writhing, tearing—a blackened contortion, a senseless demon! \* \* \* From that hour, all that was human I loathed—all that was divine I doubted and repudiated! I was free, and attaching myself to an Order, cut loose in its creed from all essential principles of probity or morality, yet commanding by prescription outward reverence, I found no check, but rather every incentive, to the gratification of a passion, which, in its intensity, now absorbed every other—*revenge*. Yet, crushed as I was,

—loathsome too, and burthensome—intriguing and hateful—I was loved, and loved as only woman loves, and that in her madness—her despair. I need not say I was human—I *can* say I was worse—for, on my part, it was crime without the poor excuse of passion. But in time there came a being who struck on every chord of the withered heart—a being, loving, beauteous, ingenuous, and innocent; and I, who could stand before man unblenched, before woman unmoved, I shrank from the calm clear eye of childhood; its ray was as heaven's own lightning thrilling through my frame—I trembled before it! And so, to stranger hands I committed my treasure, and to stranger's lands I sent him, and few and far between were our interviews, and harsh and tyrannical was my rule over him; for, at every stage of his young life, *his* integrity became *my* condemnation! Do I tire you with my weight? You tremble—and I—”

Maturin did tremble, but he assisted him into his chair, and, kneeling down, threw his arms upon the side of it, and buried his face.

“ Proceed, Sir ; pray proceed,” he said, in a deep, calm voice, and the Padre resumed :—

“ In spite of all, my affections revived and twined themselves round this creature ; my pride, too, was reawakened. Whatever *I* might be—and none could judge me more severely than I judged myself—I was the father of an upright son. How little my treatment or example had made him so, may *he* forgive me ! But even here, on what seemed holy ground—and if anything earthly deserve to be called holy, it is parental love—my old temptation found me ; by the ruin of my enemy, I would fain build up a name and a fame for my child.”

Something like a groan escaped Maturin. Basino paused, took another draught of brandy, and was going to rise ; but Maturin laid his

hand upon him. "Go on, Sir, in the name of Heaven!" he said, and again shrouded his face, which was pale to ghastliness.

"It so happened," he continued, "I had the power of conferring a signal service on his Holiness. I discovered one of those plots, so rife in these times, and saved, at some personal risk, his crown and his life. He was not ungrateful, for once; he took me into his confidence, and I gained unlimited influence over him. How did I apply it? Not for my own honour or advancement, as you are witness, but for his, my son's. Yes, I advanced *him* to trust and power, and my heart leapt with exultation when the city resounded with his praises. And all had been well, had he exhibited common deference to his slave and master; but he trusted to *principles*, and scoffed at *experience*,—to *principles*, in a city undermined with socialism and infidelity, and at the mercy of factious demagogues! His position was one to excite every evil passion

in the envious and discontented,—and he was surrounded by enemies he little suspected. There was one in especial, a man whom he trusted, and of high reputation, but a very Judas—a member of the most sanguinary and unscrupulous of all the secret Societies, and, being a traitor to that Society, amenable to death at the hand of any one of its members. Well, I swept him from his path, as I would have swept a scorpion; he was every way vile, and I did not repent the deed, as it saved my son,—nor do I now; but—” he paused.

“It is too much!” said Maturin, starting up. “Great God! can all this, indeed, have been, *Thy will!*” He clasped his hands together, his whole frame seemed to collapse, and he stood for some moments the very image of wretchedness and despair. All at once, like a lightning-flash, a doubt of the whole—a *hope*—darted through his soul; he turned to the priest, who had risen, and seemed

about to retire,—“The fifteenth,” he said, “the fatal fifteenth! How can you account for your part on that day?”

“My arm was raised to save, not to destroy. From causes I am too exhausted now to enter upon, you were denounced and doomed. None doubted my faith if I undertook the task; and though, to save suspicion, you might have been wounded but for the interposition of your fair preserver, my aim was, to save you from a surer and a deadlier thrust. No, Angelo,” he continued, “I have endured your hate and loathing, as a retributive curse for the wild wreck my own passions have wrought on others; and have given you, in return, from the moment of your birth until now, ceaseless watching and unquenchable love! I have spared you, thus far, the revelation of what I knew would be worse than torture; but the time is now come—you hold me in your power—use that power! Let the law take its vengeance on a murderer!—but

bear in mind that that murderer, is your own parent !”

“ Oh, God ! it is too,—too much !” said Maturin, and fell senseless on the floor.



## CHAPTER VIII.

“ Lord of unsleeping love,  
From everlasting Thou ! we shall not die.  
These, even these, in mercy didst thou form ;  
Teachers of good through evil, by brief wrong  
Making truth lovely, and her future might  
Magnetic o'er the fix'd untrembling heart.”

S. T. COLERIDGE.

SLOWLY and sadly Maturin wended his way through the deep grove of the Negroni, and from thence to his hotel in the Sistina. Fearful and anxious as he had always been on the subject of his origin, the sad reality exceeded his worst anticipations. To his pure and scrupulous mind, the heritage of shame had been hard to bear ; but crime, coupled with that shame, formed a cloud over his future existence, through which no sunbeam could

penetrate, no wandering star suggest a hope. Nor could he, at first, reconcile to his conscience the part he had acted—the firmness with which he had pursued political views, in direct opposition to those of his patron—the silence in which he had shrouded the discovery of that patron's machinations against the Dimsdale's—the adroitness with which he had now placed him in his power, by harbouring Gaspino's servant. Yet, had he even been aware of the bond which united them, could he, as a high public functionary, have attended to what seemed the ravings of private passion, on matters connected with the public weal? Nay, was he free to differ, on a point of such magnitude, from the chief under whom he served? And, in any capacity, or under any relation, would and ought he not to have strained every nerve to prevent the further commission of crime?

When he reached his quarters, his brain reeled under the pressure of conflicting thought,

and he paced the room with the desperation and bewilderment that may well be supposed to seize the wild monarch of the desert, the first hour that iron bars and a keeper's rod, restrain the freedom of his limbs, and awaken in his breast the sensation of fear. It was a hideous bondage that now threatened him, and one that could only end with his life. Firm in the rectitude of his purpose, he had hitherto shrunk from the eye of no man; but, henceforth, he felt he should cower before a child:—a murderer's fame, like the fabled garb of Nessus, was fatal to all whom it touched.

As the Dimsdales presented themselves on the troubled mirror, an icy bolt seemed to dart through his frame: every trait of nobleness in the elder—every generous and affectionate impulse of the younger—the singleness of soul and devoted tenderness of Leoline,—all whispered, as with tongues of flame, an eternal severance from the son of their diabolic persecutor.

The cup of woe was full, full to overflowing ; misery had reached its limit. Had the spirit of evil planned the present hour, not one iota could have been added to its bitterness ! But a period succeeded of calmer thought,—or, perhaps we might almost say, of no thought at all ; so overtaken had been his heart and brain ; so palsied within him was that hope, which at his age sustains the soul as air and light sustain the body ! and as the first ray of dawn beamed on his haggard features, the words of Basino resounded like a prophecy on himself—“ I have *felt* till I was *fire*, and I have *felt* till I am *stone*.”

But then, again, came self-reproach—deep, bitter, and unanswerable self-reproach. What a key-note of misery were those few words ! What an amount of untold suffering must have wracked that man of giant intellect and giant will ! And, perhaps, there had been a time when he dreamt not of evil, even shuddered at the thought of crime ; perhaps, in

the midst of the very vortex into which he afterwards plunged, there had crept to him, in his solitude, the anguish of remorse—that worm which dieth not—that still soft sound which the whirl of worlds can never hush!

“Why did my heart never yearn towards him?” he exclaimed passionately; “how often, when loading me with benefits, has he not reproached me for my coldness! But a fiction usurped my imagination, and what would have been clear as noonday to any one else, was dark to me! Fool, idiot, ingrate that I have been! Oh, God, forgive me!”

He watched, for a few minutes, the gradual diffusion of light over the dark roofs of the city; and, harassed as he was, he marked how silently the glorious sunbeams pervaded every darkened nook and alley, and then burst, as it were, in a flood of radiance over the domes of God’s many temples. A moisture gathered in his eyes, and calmer, holier thoughts soothed, by degrees, his troubled spirit. “The dark-

ness," he whispered, "is no darkness to Him; and evil, as men call evil, may be a no less natural and essential alternation of His moral universe. A part, perhaps, of all this misery might have been averted, but not the whole, since the seeds were sown before my birth: at all events, '*Thy* will be done!'" And, retiring into his chamber, he communed with Him, in whose bosom alone the heavy-laden lose their burthen, and weary souls find rest.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was still early when he had visited and again issued from the Negroni, after a lengthened and serious parley with the Padre; and during the day he traversed, with rapid strides, almost every part of the city. Late on the following morning a sealed packet was delivered to Mr. Dimsdale, and the contents of this will best explain both his present movements and future intentions:—

“MY DEAR MR. DIMSDALE,—With feelings of no ordinary embarrassment I sit down to address you; and it is from the depths of a bitter desolation that I have to bespeak your indulgence, your sympathy.

“It seldom happens that a point long dwelt upon in the imagination, does not lose some at least of its poignancy, when the moment arrives for its realisation; yet such has not been the case as regards that mystery connected with myself, on the solving of which depended all I could ever know of happiness on earth. I fear I shall stand guilty in your eyes—I *feel* so in my own—for the unaccountable blindness which has possessed me on this agitating topic, yet was it not altogether without foundation.

“I think I remember speaking to you once of having received the dying confession of the infamous Abbé de ——. I had been sent for by him, not without design; I was a *protégé* of the Padre Basino, and the Padre had

been intrusted with the nurture and education of a son of the Abbé—a son whom, after a certain time, he had abandoned with the same careless selfishness which had previously broken the heart of its noble mother. Towards the last, an idea possessed him that *I* was his child, and the evasiveness with which the Padre Basino treated the subject, when I placed a considerable sum in his hands, left by the dying man for the use of his boy, confirmed me in my suspicion. Such a fate as this had been bad enough, but, alas! for the first time, my pen must now refuse to be the record of my heart—a heart torn, perplexed, and bewildered! My good friend, I cannot contemplate, I will not even think of, the revulsion you will experience when I tell you I am the son of . . . . I cannot write it——

\* \* \* \* \*

“ It is now midnight, and the early morn bears me far away from you and yours—*for*



*ever!* Oh! Mr. Dimsdale, could I but tell you all that underlies those few words! could I but reveal to you the dreary blank into which they cast my present, and involve my future life! But it is impossible! the sphere in which the *affections* move, is the real world to each individual soul, and every track beyond it, presents either a sandy desert or a thorny wilderness.

“ There are, of course, many of my fellow-men whom I highly esteem, and many more with whom I sincerely sympathise; but some mystic thread bound me to you the first moment I set my foot upon your hearth; and in the eternal severance which I now pronounce inevitable, I part, I truly tell you, with all my earthly store of hope and happiness.

“ But, to results: I leave Europe with the next tide, and I leave it with il Padre Basino, him whom I must regard henceforth as claiming from me the care and attention due to

a parent. I cannot dwell upon his past acts—you would not wish me; but, in glancing at those personal to yourself, I have some satisfaction in declaring there were palliating circumstances, although I have it not in my power to define them precisely. It is evident, however, that in your first connexion with the Daltoni family, there was some individual whose wishes or whose passions received a sudden check, and whose graceless task it was to malign you to il Padre—to accuse you of conduct of which you were wholly incapable; and, at the same time, to excite in him those direful feelings, which, till now, have proved so quenchless in their intensity—so irresistible in their power of evil.

“Further light may, possibly, never be thrown upon the subject; and I find my greatest consolation in the consciousness, that, for what is past, your noble nature is incapable of harbouring a sentiment of revenge. For the future, rest assured, you have nought

to fear ; that condition I have made absolutely and peremptorily, and its infringement will be impossible. The chain is broken, my friend, both for you and your family, and no Jesuitical threads will henceforth entangle your ways, or embarrass your wishes.

“ Other obliquities of conduct there were, only too much to be deplored ; and I might tell you how deeply instigated many of them were, by an almost childish tenderness and insane ambition for my ungrateful and most unworthy self ; but you would willingly spare me, I know, the painful, and now, unbecoming, recital.

“ As regards my future, in which I am fain to flatter myself you will still feel some degree of interest, my charge will be a charge, and a heavy one too, for the present. Bodily disease has come on apace with the Padre ; it has seriously deranged his nerves, and the moorings of the mind are evidently giving way. It may be second childhood that I

shall have to tend ; it may be—God knows ! but come what may, to His supreme will I am wholly resigned. My path, I do not disguise from myself, will be an arduous one, but it will be, *the path of duty* ; my power over the affections of my companion is very considerable, and this power was doubtless given for a purpose.

“ My friend, should I be the humble instrument of leading him, in his last days, to that Almighty Being whom he has so long defied, will my sacrifice and my sufferings have been in vain ? I *feel* they will not ; and I feel, moreover, that, setting aside special duties, in the East as in the West, there is *His* work to be done,—done, not exactly, perhaps, in the form and manner stereotyped by European usage and ideas, but in accordance with apostolic example, and on the basis of the broad principles of our common humanity. A nomad of the Steppes will adhere to no pastor, but his high, free heart will

bound towards a *message*—a *thought* from heaven: and our religion, pure, poetic, and universal, is adapted to find an echo in the spirituality of his enthusiastic nature.

“One piece of information I have yet to give, which may be of interest, and perhaps advantage to you. Glaslyn was purchased and founded, as a tribute to her whose memory you so fondly revere, and with the money intended to have been her wedding dower. The Cardinal, with his natural *insouciance*, intrusted the whole affair to il Padre, even to the custody, afterwards, of the title-deeds. By some unaccountable agency, these documents have, quite lately, been abstracted from il Padre’s *escritoire*; and, what makes the matter more bewildering to him, is the fact, that a considerable sum of money, lying with them, was left untouched. *He* seems regardless of the loss, as of everything else, just now, but *you* may think the matter worthy some investigation. One request on my own account

I have to make, and one which I know you will be good enough to excuse, as it concerns that poor Cristoforo, our trustiest of messengers ! You have often begged me to make use of your purse, and a trifle bestowed on this individual, when you leave Rome, would, it so happens, be an act of kindness to me as well as to him ; for I found, to my grief to-day, that, after I had satisfied all just demands, there was no remaining surplus for this promised pensioner. His history is a touching one. He was accused, falsely be it observed, of having betrayed the secrets of a clerico-political functionary, and sentence of death was commuted for horrible mutilation. Surely the day will shortly arrive, when the fetid dungeons of Rome will no longer foster brutality in the sacred name of *justice* ! Touch poor Cristoforo's palm with a key, and he will know what services your donation is to recompense.

“ And now, my friend, adieu,—and, from the depths of my heart, I thank you ! An adven-

turer, as I should be called in your rich and conventional country, you yet had the largeness of soul to show me kindness ;—without, at that time, an ostensible claim on any human being, you allowed me, without question, to establish any claim I pleased, either on your name or your resources,—could human confidence and charity go higher ? I am still poor, I am still friendless, more essentially friendless than ever, and I have nought to offer but my prayers—my sincere and heart-felt prayers—and, my thanks ! Of your nephew and niece, how shall I speak ? what shall I say ? Sometimes I dwell with wretchedness on the disgust with which they will possibly turn from my very name ; sometimes I try to soothe myself by fancying that a lighter shadow may rest on my remembrance, and that, in their secret hearts, I may still stand dissociated from all connexion with their several sufferings. In my own spirit-desert, they rest, the sole oasis ; the affection I bear them is intertwined with

the very fibres of my being—of all that successively circled round me, *they* only spoke to my soul, and, possessed it. May they be happy! Pardon, Sir, that the son of your persecutor has presumed still to call you *friend*; that you have proved yourself one, is the only gleam that lightens the dark destiny of

“Your ever obliged and affectionate,

“ANGELO.

“Would you be kind enough to give my only treasure, the enclosed watch, to Barbina Spinoza, who, I have reason to believe, hovers about the Palazzo Daltoni? All that my desolate childhood knew of indulgence was from her; and what have I not owed to her since? Commend me also, in the terms you think may be acceptable, to the Lady Adela; *her* future, I trust, is now unclouded and happy.—Addio.”

This painful duty over, Maturin's preparations for departure were soon completed, and long before the peep of dawn he was *en route*



for Civita Vecchia, whence a vessel was to sail for Smyrna with the tide. On his arrival, Basino, who was to have preceded him by the post diligence the evening before, was nowhere to be found, nor could he gain any intelligence of such a person having been seen amongst the throng who crowded the quay. The captain, however, was prepared for his own reception; the passage had been paid for by a gentleman-like youth the night before, his name duly entered on the passengers' book, and the most minute arrangements made for his embarkation.

This circumstance made Maturin still more anxious and uncomfortable: he stood for some time watching different bales of merchandise hauled on deck, and restless passengers hurrying to and fro with their various cares and inquiries; then he walked rapidly up and down, partly impelled by the raw chilliness of the atmosphere, and partly by a little attack of constitutional impatience.

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It could not be that the Padre had changed his mind, but he might have been taken ill from the excitement of the previous day; he expected that it would be so, and had begged him to wait that they might perform the journey together, but on this point his negative had been absolute. Then there came fears that some exposure might have taken place. He was sure of the fidelity of his old attendant, but there was treachery in every act and word, every expression and line in the countenance of Boldero. Amid all the wild, lawless passions which at that moment agitated the city, by far the most prominent and undisguised was intense hatred to the priests; and, upon the slightest pretence, he well knew there was neither authority nor principle to prevent a sudden and savage vengeance on any one of the body. The thought was harrowing! He shuddered, and knew not what to do.

At this instant of utter uncertainty, a rough mariner touched him on the arm, pointed to

the vessel nearly released from its moorings, and shouldering his valise, walked off, and deposited it on the last truck in the act of being wheeled on board. He was about to repossess himself of his belongings, when the bell for departure rang out lustily, and a young man, whom he had observed from the first hovering about, walked up to him quite coolly, and tendering him a sealed packet, begged him to embark immediately, as he would find in that sufficient reasons to justify the step.

Maturin bowed an acknowledgment, and placed it in his breast.

"Sufficiently mysterious, like all my antecedents," he muttered to himself; "however, now or never! At all events, I can easily return when *they* are gone,"—and he leapt into the boat.

As the day advanced, and the well-appointed vessel swept gallantly over the waters, he felt his spirit in some measure revive; he had been forced, as it were, into an act of decision,

and it is irresolution that makes us unhappy. Still, his native cheeriness could not surmount his other troubles sufficiently to enable him to enter into conversation; and, seating himself rather apart from the rest of the passengers, he drew forth Basino's packet, and read as follows :—

“MY DEAR ANGELO,—When the arrangement was made for our leaving Rome together, it was as far as it is now from my intention to abide by it. I but tried another of those tests on your heart and principles, from which you have always come out triumphant. Do not be wrathful; ‘the victory of man lies not in *innocence*, but in *tried virtue*.’ What, think you, that after devoting myself to your advancement and interests from the hour you were born, I would *now* obstruct your path, and crush your young heart by my baneful presence? It were as absurd as impossible—as impossible as absurd! No, my son, I

leave you unshackled to the guidance of that inward monitor which thus far has never deserted you, and am myself resigned to the fate which inevitably awaits all who step aside from the general path—a path beaten smooth by craven fear and ignorant stupidity.

“The secret of our connexion will, if you are wise, rest in your bosom; its disclosure can benefit no one, and would of course be prejudicial to yourself. The stock from whence you sprang is both ancient and noble, and you will soon be able to say with truth, that you stand alone in the world. When this event happens, measures are taken that you shall be duly apprised of it, and that it is not far distant, I am well assured; the transit of Saturn over the opposition of the sun’s place, on the day of my birth, is but too significant.

“Still, my son, were I one of the pine-away reliant on a spiritual phantasma, I should despair of your position. Destitute of a

connection, profession, or even a communion of faith, you are, in vulgar eyes, a mere feather on the stream of life, and liable at each instant to be hopelessly engulfed: but, I know the might that dwells in men of your calibre, and neither whine over your late mishap, nor distrust the star that shines brightly on your future. Pursue, henceforth, whatever career your genius shall dictate, and fear no further interference on my part, either with your plans or your aspirations. Inclosed is a sum as large as it would be either agreeable or safe to carry about your person, and a like amount will be remitted to you annually by Torlonia. It is my private property, and not having been wrung from the miserable dupes of an effete superstition, you need have no qualms in its appropriation. It is invested inalienably for the use and purposes of Count Nasibo, a name and title I wish you henceforth to adopt.

“A few words on a certain subject, and,

I fear, a painful one. You will have had the wisdom, I presume, not to impart any thing that has recently transpired between us to that Welch family now in Rome; and you will feel, I am aware, more poignantly than I like to contemplate, the renunciation of your first entanglement with the sex. I regret having placed you as I did within the sphere of temptation; but the individual appeared to me of too inferior a cast of character to attract a man of your mental *status*. I should have remembered that youth and age see through a different medium, and that when nature had formed my Nina, she broke the mould.

“However, as I said before, I regret that I should have been the means of causing you pain; and still more, that knowing what you do, the sacrifice should now have become irremediable. It may be some indemnification to you to learn, that the object of your attachment will possibly be a beggar, or, at least, not

the fortune which the world has been pleased to consider her. The promise I made you respecting that idiot Dimsdale, I intend to keep scrupulously,—but you would wish me, I am sure, to be *just*. Know, then, that the child of Nina lives,—lives, and within seven days will claim both a father's countenance and a father's heritage! He will prove, I doubt, far from the kind of son acceptable to that father, and the previous relations between them will not enhance his attractions; but natural disposition is apt to go by inheritance, and he, it so happens, has drawn a draft in full on the paternal side. In fact, so far has my enmity yielded to your representations, that, at this moment, I wish in my heart Dr. Boldero were more like yourself.

“My son, adieu. We have met and parted for the last time. Write to me of your wanderings, for a wanderer you must be for the short space I have yet to exist. When



you have no longer a parent to blush for, you will return to Europe, and, as I said before, the celestial influences are propitious for your future. Think of me with all the charity and kindness of your nature, since, in *your* cognizance of the past, I suffer the only retribution to which I was susceptible. Strange infatuation! strange homage in your person to views, the narrowness of which I have repudiated in my own with the contempt they merit. Belonging really to no creed, I scorn to seek the shelter of one, or I might direct you for the justification of all for which you could condemn me to the pages of Cabasutius \* and Reiffenstuel, † *cum multis aliis*. I but ask you to bear in mind, that, if goaded by bodily suffering and mental anguish, I may have fearlessly done, what you, with your convictions, would have shrunk from, yet, as regards yourself, I have shown a devotion

\* The Maynooth class-book of canon-law.

† Vol. v. p. 203, lib. 5, Decretals, tit. vii.

that never knew a pause—an affection unconscious of a limit! Principles have done much in establishing your mastery over me, but a look of *her*, perhaps, still more,—how you came by it is a mystery, the blood connection being so remote.

“That all good and happiness may ever attend you, is the heart-felt desire of, my dear Angelo,

“Your truly affectionate Father,

“NICOLA BASINO.”

## CHAPTER IX.

“ Nature never made  
A heart all marble ; but, in its fissures, sows  
The wild flower love.”

BARRY CORNWALL.

“ Something the heart must have to cherish,  
Must love, and joy, and sorrow learn ;  
Something with passion clasp, or perish,  
And in itself to ashes burn.

*Hyperion.*

“ Hence, rotten thing, or I shall shake thy bones  
Out of thy garments !”

*Coriolanus.*

It would not be easy to describe the various effects produced on the different members of the Palazzo Daltoni, when the contents of Maturin's letter became known. As regarded the mystery of his paternity, what caused the most surprise was, that a father and son *could*

be so diametrically opposite; and, by one of those revulsions common to generous minds, the indignation and contempt entertained against the former became merged, as it were, in a deepened regard and commiseration for the latter. But none could endure the thought, that Maturin should have fancied, for a moment, he would suffer in their estimation for the deeds of a parent—deeds, too, which he had systematically and fearlessly set himself to counteract; and, whilst they admired the delicacy and high feeling that prompted his self-banishment, the prospect of never seeing him again was a grief as bewildering as it was sudden and severe. Frederic's plan of action was soon decided upon: he should seek and bring him back, were it from the steppes of Tartary, the heights of Chimborazo, the depths of the ocean, or the centre of Vesuvius.

“What! lose my fine old fellow, merely because his father is a rascal, or something worse! that I never will! Cheer up, Leo,

child! and don't look as if the world were come to an end, because your *Sposo* that is to be is gone into the garden of the sun, to warm himself after such a chill to his system! Cheer up! he shall come back as sure as my name's— Halloo! Spitfire, you scoundrel! what are you about there? hunting a dirty priest? He scents that old villain, as a greyhound scents a hare; 'tis he, for a ducat!" and darting out of the window, he was soon lost amongst the shrubs.

"Fred, in his random way, generally strikes the right chord," said Mr. Dimsdale. "There is an instinctive propriety, no less than a deep feeling, in this step of our friend's, and we cannot condemn him for it, however we may regret his loss. Still my own opinion is, that the priest will not remain with him long; he may have gone to the East, to suit some temporary purpose, but that is all. In a little time we will seek out the Doctor, and bring him back, as Frederic says: to desert him now,

would be to prove our friendship worthless indeed."

"Thank you, dear Uncle!" said Leoline, who was standing behind his chair, with tears trembling in her eyes,—“thank you very much!” and she kissed his white forehead, a liberty she was surprised she had dared to take, as she hurried into her own room, where, burying her pale face in her pillow, she wept bitterly. \* \* \* \* \*

But the excitement of this blow was trifling compared to that which occurred in a few days, when Mr. Dimsdale was called upon by an advocate of known integrity in the city, and the disclosure hinted at in Basino's letter to Maturin made to him, with all the exactness and attention to minutiae becoming so important a revelation. The history ran, that at the time of giving birth to her son, Mrs. Dimsdale had been in a state of great mental distress, caused partly by the absence of her husband at such a crisis, and partly from

annoyance at suspicions he had previously cast upon her character; that she was in consequence seized with fever, of which she had died, and her infant, taken ill at the same time, was reported by her own maid, Maria Spinoza, to have died also. This woman had been her attendant from her youth, and in the excess of her attachment, it was stated, would not allow any one else to approach her in her extremity. A few years afterwards, Maria being at the point of death herself, and in great agony of mind, had made known to il Padre Basino, that, stung by a contemptuous expression she had once overheard Mr. Dimsdale apply to her, she had resolved to be avenged, and for this purpose had contrived to send the infant out of the house, yet alive, and to substitute for it the body of a peasant's child just deceased. She was so accurate in her details, as to leave no doubt whatever on the mind of the Padre of the truth of her statement; and he had, in fact, found the boy in the care of her sister, Barbina

Spinoza, exactly as she had asserted, by whom he had been brought up. Why the Padre had not revealed the discovery to Mrs. Dimsdale's family, and why he had himself educated the youth, and subsequently placed him near Mr. Dimsdale's person, were questions which, with many others, he would meet Mr. Dimsdale and reply to, on that gentleman expressing his readiness to acknowledge Dr. Boldero for his son. Did he decline doing this, the Padre reserved his proofs and further knowledge on the subject to assist the young man in establishing his claim; for Barbina Spinoza being no more, he was now the sole witness who could throw light on the transaction.

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It was about a week afterwards, that, at the Cardinal's request, the advocate again made his appearance at the Palazzo to repeat the extraordinary narration, and accompanied this time by the Padre and Dr. Boldero. The interim had been a period of gloom, anxiety, and bewilderment, the aged invalid himself



being the only individual who remained calm and self-possessed.

"I fear, my dear Uncle, you are going to do too much," said Adela, as she drew forth the full canonical robes, which for many, many years had not seen the light. "Have you forgotten that both Dr. Carneggi and dear Angelo warned you of the extreme danger of over-exciting yourself?"

"No, my child, no; do not be alarmed," he replied; "there is a might in the right, and I feel most thankful to be free from pain this morning, and equal to hearing this absurd and insolent history. Send Luigi now directly; the toilette will be a long business to-day; and, hark ye! keep yourself perfectly composed, and do what you can to reassure the poor Dimsdales. We must not allow the enemy even the momentary triumph of sad faces. Now, go! but look in by-and-by for a minute, to see that I am all right; Luigi and I may both have forgotten the fashion of the scarlet."

In common with all the ancient princely residences of Rome, the Palazzo Daltoni contained a spacious ante-room, or chamber of audience, at the upper end of which stood a chair of state, surmounted by a lofty canopy, on which was emblazoned the armorial bearings of the family. Age and neglect told a certain tale on these remains of feudal grandeur; but the superb columns of porphyry that flanked the throne on either side,—the richly gilded ceiling,—the pavement composed of rare and various marbles,—and the few but exquisite sculptures tastefully arranged to break the monotony of space,—defied the ravages of time, and impressed on the beholder a sense at once of grandeur and harmony.

At a little before one, the Cardinal was wheeled into this apartment, and placed on the seat of justice. Mr. Dimsdale sat on his right hand, and entirely concealed, when he pleased, by a pillar; next to him was

Frederic, whose countenance was grave and thoughtful; whilst the ladies were arranged on the left, and a line of aged domestics, forming a kind of crescent on either side. A table covered with crimson velvet, much faded, but embroidered richly with gold, and corresponding to the canopy, extended nearly the width of the hall in front of the throne; and as Basino was marshalled with stately ceremony to a chair on the opposite side of this, and directly facing the Cardinal, a keen glance shot from his restless and fiery eye, whilst, as he returned the formal salutation of his patron, and noted the contemptuous glances of the rest of the family, his lips were compressed with iron sternness, and the lines of his face grew rigid as cords.

We will not tire the reader by a reiteration of that with which he is already acquainted; suffice it, that to every question put by the Cardinal, a ready and conclusive reply was afforded,—the chain of testimony was com-

plete,—and Mr. Dimsdale rose with the intention of assenting to a claim, there seemed no possibility to doubt or evade; but the Cardinal, with a slight gesture of the hand, motioned to him to resume his seat, and addressing himself to the Padre, he said,—

“Your story, Nicola Basino, is acutely devised, artfully arranged, and has been well delivered; but being one of which the truth or falsehood is of vital import to the honour and happiness of my family, you will not be surprised that I have chosen to revive the ancient custom of my house, and to have it thus discussed in the presence of all its members. I could say much, you are aware, of the systematic manner in which you formerly instilled into my ear your poisonous slanders of my respected nephew, Mr. Dimsdale, but that injury fades into insignificance before the outrage with which you now seek to crush him; in fact, the venom of the human race might well be supposed to have

concentrated itself in your single person, when you conceived the plan of foisting upon him as a son, the youth, whom, tutored in villany, you placed about his person, expressly to abridge his life."

"I deign not, my Lord Cardinal," said Basino, impetuously, "either to admit or to refute charges personal to myself,—charges to which I should only be amenable before a Chapter of the Order whose statutes you are either ignorantly or presumptuously ignoring. I but beg to call your Eminence's attention to a point of general acceptance in our Church which you seem to have forgotten,—a circumstance that will possibly excite remark when this matter comes before its proper tribunal. As a prince of the Church, you yet admitted into the bosom of your family, not merely a heretic but a blasphemer ;—yes, I repeat it,—a blasphemer! He whom you call your *respected* nephew,—the foreigner, George Dimsdale,—he whom from hating with contempt

and abhorrence, you are now pleased to advance to your right hand, and make the counsellor of your dotage,—he, I repeat it, is an infidel and a blasphemer!—a Socinian, a Pantheist, a repudiator of the Saviour and the saints!—let him deny it if he can! But, for an act done in the face of day, and many years ago, you have received your secret chastisement!—yes, in spite of blood, in spite of wealth, in spite of learning, you have had to languish in obscurity, and may still consider yourself but too fortunate, should death find you in the palace of those ancestors whose memory you have thus dishonoured and defiled! As I said before, I deign not here either to admit or to repel charges which you presume, before a *melée* of heretics, infidels, and menials, to bring against one of my Order. You have forgotten the respect due to that Order, and may likewise have forgotten that that Order has power both to assert its rights and to avenge its wrongs.

All I would beg to submit to your Eminence is, a revival of the study of our divine guides. *De Rhodes*, to wit, will tell you, that ‘If you think it a good thing to kill a man who *blasphemes*, such an act of homicide is converted into one of *religion*.’”

A sensible shudder seemed to pervade the group that faced the Padre, as he sat down with a fierce scowl upon his brow; then hastily rose again, and said,—“This, my Lord, has been a diversion from the business which brought me here to-day. In the spirit of friendship, I wished to have presented to you a young man of unblemished reputation and high scholastic acquirement; and if for a season I have concealed my knowledge of his claims, was it not that I might snatch him from the tutelage of an infidel father, and offer him to you replete with knowledge and imbued with truth,—a fit representative of the hitherto untainted name of Daltoni? In return, you brand *him* as an impostor and a

parricide, and *me* with complicity in the crimes! Proceed, Lord Cardinal! do your worst! but know that I defy your impotent malice, and dare you to dispute the claim of the innocent and unoffending!”

The Cardinal made an effort to rise, but was unable to do so; his valet, however, was quickly by his side, and Frederic also, and by their assistance he stood upright. Adela then came forward, and kneeling before him, held up a large Testament, on which he placed his hands. He looked round upon the assembled group, then fixing his gaze upon Basino, he said in a deep, low, but emphatic voice,—

“ Nicola Basino, alias Nasibo, I solemnly aver that the young man by your side, known by the name of Giacomo Boldero, is not the son of George Dimsdale and his wife, the Lady Nina, my niece, deceased; and I accuse you of deliberate conspiracy in attempting to prove that the said Giacomo Boldero has right or title either to the name or estates of the



said George Dimsdale. The truth of what I aver I will make manifest, either here or in a public court. So help me God! Amen."

He remained standing for an instant, and there was a dead silence. When he had resumed his seat, he said,—“Is it your will that we proceed?”

“By all means!” said Basino, with a kind of nervous impetuosity; and he was about to speak to Boldero, when he was attracted by a noise at the other end of the hall, and, on looking round, saw to his surprise that the entrance was guarded by *sbirri*.\*

He turned to the Cardinal, with a curling lip and a defiant eye, but there was a slight bustle at the end of the table, and then a sight which at once blanched his cheek, and palsied his utterance. A chair had been lifted in by a side door, on which, supported by pillows, lay the shrunken form of Barbina Spinoza. In vain had he sought his old

\* Police.

attendant in every nook and haunt of Rome. Her hood and kerchief he had found upon the Tiber's banks, and had come to the firm belief that, wearied of his tyranny, and disgusted with his crimes, she had sought that peace in the next world he had for ever shut from her in this. Her attire and appearance, at the present moment, might almost have warranted the idea that she had returned from another sphere to reproach and confound him. She was wrapped in a loose robe of white dimity; whilst a long strip of the same material was folded over her head, in the fashion of a nun's veil. Her limbs were motionless as death, and there was a sepulchral pallor over her countenance; but her eyes, which were large and intensely black, gleamed with an almost unearthly light, and as they rested first upon one, and then upon another, each individual turned instinctively from their fearful gaze.

"Barbina Spinoza," said the Cardinal, when silence was restored, "I call upon you this day

to bear a painful testimony, but it is a testimony due at once to justice and to truth ; and, hovering as you are upon the brink of the grave, it is incumbent upon you to rid your bosom of the wicked deception which you have, under a cruel coercion, for so many years connived at fostering. I adjure you, therefore, in the name of that God before whose tribunal both you and I must shortly appear, to repeat with bold and unfaltering accuracy the relation you voluntarily made to me, on the day when I permitted you, dishonoured as you are, to find in my house a refuge from vengeance and from death. Speak, as you then did, simply and truthfully. Your first error, committed as it was in youth and inexperience, will find indulgence ; and with the claim you possess on the undying gratitude of all within these walls, you are protected henceforth from the violence of man, or the scorn of woman."

Barbina raised her body slightly forward, and bent her head as the Cardinal concluded,

then clasped her hands so tightly that the blood receded from the fingers' ends, and closed her eyes for a few seconds. Basino stood like a figure suddenly transformed to stone; every muscle was strained, his eyes glared, his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth; it was as though death and judgment stared him in the face, and the lowest gulf which imagination pictures, yawned trembling at his feet.

"My Lord," said Barbina, slowly and in a hollow but distinct voice, "I told you, without disguise, my early hopes and errors, my later pains and disappointments; is it your wish that I repeat my troubled story in full? Will it not be tedious? will it not be misplaced?"

"There is scarcely a passage in your sad life," said the Cardinal, "which bears not reference to the subject of our inquiry. Think, therefore, of the joy and happiness your words will confer, and fear not."

"Fear!" muttered Barbina, abstractedly,

“fear! When I *loved him*, I feared! Yes, I feared lest the breath of calumny should soil his fame, the wind of heaven too roughly bear upon his noble form; but now that I hate him! loathe him, as the viper that stung, the tiger that tore me! the fiend that again and again would have sent me unshriven, with all my sins yet fresh, to everlasting torment and unquenchable fire! Fear! Ha!—ha!” With a hoarse chuckle, her head sank down upon her breast, and she seemed to be losing all consciousness of everything and everybody around her.

“Hag! accursed hag!” screamed Basino, who had distinctly caught every word of the soliloquy, “what have you to reveal but your own shame? What have you to betray but the generosity which for years has saved you from infamy and starvation? Think you that treachery will protect you? Do you not *yet* know me?”

Had he wished to arouse the sinking frame,

to relume the slumbering sense, he could not have acted more effectively. That voice, once the sweetest music, and now the direst discord to her ear, flashed like an electric current through her veins. She held up her withered hand, the colour mounted to her faded cheeks, an intense scorn curled her lip and distended her nostrils, and, like a Pythoness in her phrensy, she broke forth,—

“Peace! thou most abhorred, thou most accursed of men! Peace! for thy wickedness has found thee out, and thy right hand shall slay thee! Withhold thy threats, and restrain thy rage! for thy defiance I hurl back at thee, and thy anger can reach me not! The curses thou didst heap on her whom thou didst allure with devilish arts to thy bosom, shall return tenfold upon thyself, and the blood thy red hand has hidden in the earth shall not sink unavenged; for thine own shall stain the stones of the highway, and even dogs turn loathing from thy festering flesh! Peace then!

And to you, Lord Cardinal, and noble gentles, pardon! Pardon, I pray you, for you know not my wrongs! 'Tis the last burst of earthly passion. Now am I ready. I will do your bidding, and then—*die*."

"Compose yourself, Barbina," said the Cardinal mildly; "and, Nicola Basino, remember what is due to our presence."

The priest dropped upon his seat, folded his arms, and, assuming a look of sullen indifference, fixed his eyes upon the ground.

Barbina bowed her head, and in tones, a little tremulous at first, but which soon became monotonous, as though the tale she was telling were constantly being repeated to herself, she began,—“I was just sixteen when my father died, and left me dependent on the charity of my mother's cousin, the Count Nasibo. Brought up in poverty, yet shrewd and well-educated for my station, I was useful to him and the Countess, who were both in bad health and in straitened circumstances. They

had one son, he who now stands before you, and he it was who first ruined, and then murdered them ; yet, not with his own hands—the coward shrunk from *that*—but with mine, my Lord, with mine ! This I told you not before, but I tell it you now ! I would proclaim it from all the hills of Rome, that he, the instigator, the *real* assassin, might find, not death, not oblivion, but execration ! avoidance ! contempt ! the curses of men, no less than the abhorrence of saints and angels ! Oh, my Lord !—oh, gentle ladies, did you know what it was, in the dark cold night, in silence and solitariness, to hear—‘ Save me, my child, oh, save me ! ’ and to see the writhing agony of aged helplessness, the cold sweat, the upturned eye, the stiffening limbs ! and then to have been left alone, with death—death, the work of my own hands, though not, God be praised, the device of my own head ! If it maddened my brain, if it hardened my heart, if it bound me to him who, in spite of it, nay, in



consequence of it, was my all on earth,—who has been so tempted? and who, oh! who so sorely punished! But this was not all. I was ere long a mother, and he had sworn to me again and again that, his parents removed, there was no longer an obstacle to our union; he should have money, and would make me his wife, and be a fond father to his son. It was a beauteous babe I bore; it had nestled in my bosom, and even the sense of guilt was lost when I pressed it to my heart. He came to see me; he took it up and caressed it, and I thought I had never known happiness before. In a few minutes it cried, as if in pain, and I held out my arms to receive it. He walked up and down the room, and began to sing to hush it; but, above his voice I heard a low gurgling sound, a hollow rattling, yet he went on singing. Presently he brought it to me. ‘The child is in a fit,’ he said, ‘what can we do?’ I rose from my bed, I darted at him like a tiger, I seized my child, I chafed its

little body, I breathed upon it,—but, it stiffened in my arms! He would have feigned sorrow—he would have taken it from me; but I warned him not to come near me, and we parted with curses. The following day I laid my little treasure in a box, and hid it. I was resolved it should have a proper burial; but in the night he found it out, and took it away, and then I first wept to think of its fate. I have done with weeping now—that was the last tear I ever shed. In a few days I was about, but there was a cold weight upon my heart; it seemed as though my dear lifeless babe lay there, and would never, never leave me. I could do nothing, I could think of nothing, I could speak to no one; I was separated from earth and heaven—*by crime.* \* \* \*

“It was late at night; the wind blew, and the rain beat, and my wretched cottage rocked like a cradle. But I heeded it not, and Nasibo came like a cloud even between me and my despair. He had a large bundle in

his arms ; and, without speaking, he laid it in the cot I had prepared for my little one, then seated himself opposite, and looked fixedly in my haggard face.

“ ‘Why are you come to torment me?’ I said. ‘Villain and murderer ! let me make my peace and *die*.’

“ ‘Die ! Barbina?’ said he, and laughed a merry laugh. ‘Die ! no, no ; you are not food for worms yet ! By Heaven ! you are more beautiful than ever, and I love you better !’

“ ‘Wretch !’ I screamed, and put my hands against my ears ; ‘I hate and abhor you ! Leave me !’

“ ‘Leave you, forsooth !’ said he, in a mocking tone. ‘Leave you ! Think again, little one ; perhaps it is for you, not me, to leave this house. Go forth ! go, and see what the world will say to you !’

“ ‘Oh, God ! was it not so ? but my heart was yet pure ! I had loved in innocence ; I had trusted in madness ; and, though my

tongue ought to blister as I tell it, I loved him still; yes, loved him, though I shrank with horror from his crimes. But I started up, and my hand was on the latch of the door. I hesitated not between death and infamy; there was no alternative—I felt it, and I was resolved. He smiled, and came to me with that look of power I never could withstand; he clasped my hand tightly, and did not speak. I struggled to be free, but he only held me more determinately.”

“‘I will not be a wretch!’ I cried; ‘I will not! I will not! In spite of the past, I am—oh, I *would* be—’

“‘Hush, fool, hush!’ he whispered; ‘*I* at least am not an idiot. I *have* loved you, I *do* love you, and I *will* love you for ever. Be reasonable, and hearken to what I have to say.’

“He led me to a seat, and then told me the secret of his long absences. He had been suspected, he said, with regard to his parents, and he was overwhelmed with debt. In des-

peration to make me his wife, he had played high, and being nervous had lost everything. What was to be done? He had received, in his youth, a good education to fit him for the Church, and he had great abilities; so he went to an University in the North, studied hard, and was at that moment within the sacred pale, and soon to be admitted a priest, and vowed to celibacy. Surprise took away my utterance, that he should *dare* assume a sacred character! Minister at the altar! But he went on:—Marriage was, of course, now out of the question; but he would still love me—love me and guard me as a brother. Yes, I should never repent the past—never be racked, as I had been, by an upbraiding conscience; he would absolve me from my sin, he would inform my mind, he would protect me from scorn and starvation; and would he not for this deserve *something* from me? Yes, oh, yes! What could I do? how deserve his *friendship*?

“At that moment there was a faint cry from

the cot ; it pierced my childless heart, and in an instant I was there. I untied, with tremulous hand, what I thought when he entered was a mere bundle of clothes,—and what shone upon me ? The bright still eyes of a new-born babe ! The little thing seemed to smile when I bent down over it, and I took it up, and went back to my chair ; he knew the rising throb of my poor bereaved heart, and said,—

“ ‘As an earnest, then, of the spotlessness of our future life, Barbina, let us begin with a work of charity. That is a motherless infant ; it shall replace the one we were so unhappy as to lose ; it will amuse you, it will comfort you, it will *love* you.’ ”

“The boy hid his tiny face in my bosom as he finished, and I held him fondly and silently. All at once a horrible suspicion darted into my mind, and I could have dashed the innocent being on the stones. ‘It is your own,’ I said ; ‘and you dare—’ ”

“‘No, on my honour, foolish child! no, I swear to you by the heaven above us! Look!’ and he pointed out to me the costly robes and laces in which the infant was dressed, and a purse of money and jewels folded in one corner of its mantle. ‘It is the child of a noble house,’ he said; ‘it was in the way, and they would have murdered it, but had not courage to go on. It is beautiful,—is it not? What eyes it has! Some day I will tell you its history. In the meantime, cherish it as your own, and keep its secret.’

“He left me, as he pretended, to return to his studies, and I saw him only at intervals for more than three years; yet I knew him to be in Rome, and often in the immediate vicinity of my dwelling. My nursling could walk and prattle, and I loved him fondly, when one day my sister, who from the time of my infatuation for Nasibo had never noticed me, came to my house. Before my birth she had been a confidential inmate in a noble Palazzo, and I

had, therefore, all my life been accustomed to look up to her with awe and respect. She was extremely ill, and in great distress, and asked, nay, implored me, to give her a night's lodging. I wondered what it all meant; but her humble tone, so unlike that which she used to assume towards me, and her evident sufferings, forbade my asking any question,—and she shared my bed and my pittance for a month, without my knowing what had reduced her to such a strait. During that time she got rapidly worse, and it was evident could not live long; but she refused to see a doctor, and her secret, if she had one, seemed likely to go with her to the grave.

“One day I had been out, to buy her some little comfort she required, and when I came home, I heard a man's voice in her room. I listened and recognised the tones; it was Nasibo. I was still as death, and caught a few words, which only sharpened my curiosity. Presently they both seemed to get excited;



there were reproaches, recriminations, threats. I grew frightened, and made a noise against the door to attract them, for I had not power to go in. Nasibo threw open the window, and I heard him drop from it into the road.

“There was a drear silence in her chamber, and when able to move I feared to enter; but my child uttered a cry, and I rushed in. Maria was motionless and deathly pale, and my boy was holding her hand, weeping; she had, however, only fainted; but the state in which she remained for three days and nights, made me expect every moment would be her last. I tended her, poor soul, as if I had known her secret. Could I reproach her? and was she not about to appear before the great Judge of all? At length she revived, as the lamp, ere it expires, sends up a last and fitful flicker. I wished her to see a priest, but she shrank at the word. I should be her confessor, she said, as I had been her comforter, her only comforter, her good angel. And it was

right, too, that she should confess to me, as I should have to be answerable in future for the consequence of her crimes.

“She then told me that the noble lady, whose confidential attendant she had been, had died in child-bed, and died in consequence of distress of mind brought on by a system of lies and treachery which she had adopted towards her.—‘But how shall I reveal to you, my sister, my horrible guilt,—you whom I have wronged, worse, if possible, than my poor mistress!’

“I re-assured her on this point, by relating what I had overheard, and also by declaring that henceforth I lived only for the child he had placed in my hands, and which I loved as fondly as if it were my own.

“She was greatly comforted by this; and by degrees, for she was in an exhausted and dying state, I learnt the strange tale, to reveal which, my Lord Cardinal, you have summoned me to your presence this day.”

She ceased, as if to collect her thoughts, and Basino rose ; he had shown symptoms of impatience for some time, and it was evident now that his passion was about to break loose.

“ I have been trying in vain, my Lord,” he said, in a husky voice, “ to discover the connection between the business for which I and my friends have been summoned hither, and the absurd, abhorrent dreamings of a decrepit and abandoned woman. I came as a friend, and I find myself placed and treated as a criminal. I can no longer submit to such trifling ; and as you do not choose to investigate, in a cordial and gentleman-like manner, the claims of your nephew by my side, I beg leave to withdraw, and your Eminence will not be surprised to find the matter placed in the hands of those, competent to command at once both attention and courtesy.” He then spoke in a low voice to the advocate and Dr. Boldero, and the trio were about to retire ; but at a sign from the Cardinal, the *sbirri* moved up the hall, and

took their station at a little distance behind them. Basino literally foamed with rage.

“What means this, my Lord?” he exclaimed; “am I a criminal, and amenable to such a jurisdiction as this? Is the palace of the Daltoni a prison? My Lord, you are in your dotage! My Lord, you forget there is still a power in Rome—a power to punish treachery and crush insolence, though robed in scarlet!”

“Your last words, Sir,” said the Cardinal, with great composure, “are the words of truth. There is, I have ascertained, still a power in our unhappy city to punish treachery and crush insolence, and that power I mean to evoke. But there is a respect due to authority, and I wish to show my sense of that respect, by this preliminary inquiry in my own hall into the grounds and merits of the plea you have had the audacity to advance. I have to beg, Sir, that you will not again interrupt a narrative, which, however lengthened by the occasional garrulity of an enfeebled mind, still contains

evidence of the last importance to the future welfare and happiness of my family ; and I also pray you to remember, that however distressing to your feelings these reminiscences may be of your former life, the affair is of your own seeking."

"It is a tissue of falsehood, my Lord, from one end to the other ! Barbina Spinoza !" and he turned towards her, "look at me, and *dare* to proceed with the infamous falsehoods which your vile imagination is fabricating." He fixed upon the poor creature a look which she had well designated a *look of power*; it was a basilisk glance, and might have appalled the stoutest heart, but she seemed to know it too well to encounter its influence, and turning towards the Cardinal said,—

"My hours are numbered, my Lord ; I know it, I feel it—and a rising sun will never again gladden my mortal eyes ; and the words I have uttered, and those I am going to utter, are the words I would speak were my heavenly Judge

at this moment to command me to tell the tale of sin which He, alas ! knows all too well. Will the gracious young lady bring me the Holy Book, and let me swear to my truth? My limbs are cold and dead, or I would not ask it, but even now would kneel at your Eminence's footstool, and take the solemn oath."

"We are satisfied, Barbina," said the Cardinal; "your narrative as you first related it to me is on paper, and you have attested its accuracy. This reiteration could not be dispensed with, and I regret it should have been made so extremely painful to you; but I beseech you to proceed fearlessly and boldly to the end, remembering it will make others happy when you and I are in the silent grave, and also that it is an act of justice to him whom you so tenderly reared and fondly loved. Would that he were here to sustain us this day!"

"Oh, my Lord Cardinal, would that he were!" and a sudden gleam of animation lighted up her countenance,—“Would to God

that I might gaze once more upon his noble face ! hear once more that silvery voice, that never uttered an unkind word ! could feel again that hand, so white and soft, so gentle as a woman's, which has often and often stroked and caressed me, guilty and hateful as I am !—But it is not the will of God ! it is not the will of God !” She hid her face in her hands, and her words and the energy of her distress brought tears into the eyes of poor Leoline, whose palpitating heart was fast prophesying its secret wishes. Mr. Dimsdale sat the very image of wretchedness and despair ; he dared not form a guess even on a matter so intensely significant to himself ; whilst Frederic, whose more buoyant spirit had for some time settled the mystery, looked the very personification of restlessness and fidget. In a few minutes, Barbina, after sipping a little wine which Luigi very thoughtfully brought to her, went on :—

“ My half-sister, Maria Spinoza, was the foster-sister of the Lady Nina Daltoni,

and had been brought up in this Palazzo as her humble companion. She was much attached to her mistress, as everybody was who knew her, and who seemed indeed, from all I ever heard, but a little lower than the angels. Nicola Nasibo loved her—worshipped her; but she knew his vices, and though she *would* not hate, she *could* not love him. Still, on the ground of a distant kinship, he was always about her; she had immense influence over him, and she *might*—God only knows—she might, perhaps, have made him a better man. But the die was cast, she married another, and from that moment rage and hatred took possession of his breast, and he swore a solemn oath he would be revenged. In my sister, alas! he found a willing agent in the execution of his black purposes; she had been long and secretly attached to him, and would have lent herself to anything, so that it brought them occasionally into intimate communication and relations with one another. It is hateful, my Lord, and



unfit for gentle ladies to hear, but still you say the whole must be made known, or *he*, the sweet lamb, will for ever be an outcast and unhappy! Well, then, my own wretched fate was also my poor sister's; we were but stepping stones to the accomplishment of certain objects, and these objects attained, ruthlessly trodden upon by our vile betrayer. Nicola Nasibo swore to Maria, as he swore to me when I administered the hateful drugs to his poor old parents, that, do his bidding, aid him to revenge that marriage, and she should be his wife. Then it was that he absented himself from Rome, whilst she transcribed his malicious letters, and delivered them to the poor young couple,—letters instilling into the mind of each the worst suspicions of the other, and converting their new-born happiness into the most hopeless and hapless misery."

A deep groan burst from Mr. Dimsdale at this moment, in spite of the strongest effort at self-control; and Leoline glided behind

the Cardinal, whispered a few words into her uncle's ear and stationed herself by his side.

“Nor did the mischief stop here,” continued Barbina; “you, my Lord Cardinal, did not escape, you know. The villain, robed in the sacred vestments of the Church, and pretending the most outrageous strictness and piety, took advantage of your unsuspecting nature—worked himself into your confidence, your affections—and never allowed you, from that moment to the present year, when all his schemes have been frustrated, to think of your nephew but with unkindness and dislike. But the lady died—whether by foul means I cannot say, for Maria was agitated when she approached that point, and I dared not question her—and the babe, the poor babe, was doomed. Nasibo had lurked about for a week previous to its birth; the husband was absent, and he had dared to force himself

upon the privacy of the lady, and in spite of the state in which she was, to heap upon her the most bitter reproaches; nay, not content with upbraiding her for the misery which he pretended she had caused himself, he reviled her for having married a heretic, and threatened her with eternal damnation in that world into which he told her she would soon pass. The effect of this was speedy,—she was a mother, and soon afterwards a corpse!

“ Maria had extraordinary craft as well as determination, and she needed them both in the execution of her wicked designs. Pretending that her mistress had left an express request that only herself should watch her remains, or attend upon her child, no one else approached the chamber,—and, can you believe it?—in the dead of the night, she and her hateful accomplice met there—*there* where the spirit of the gentle and beauteous mother might still be supposed to linger—to complete

their hellish work, to massacre the babe! Poor innocent! *she* loathed it as a relic of her whom *he* had idolised, and *he* regarded it as the fittest object on which to wreak his vengeance on the father.

“There was a long debate, she told me, as to the mode they should adopt. Nasibo would have crushed out its little breath with a grasp of his huge hand, as he had done his own—the villain! but she, more wary, feared the swollen features might betray the fact to the household, who would pass through the room on the morrow to take a last look at their mistress, and handed to him a stiletto. He felt its edge, and the babe slept upon her lap; she bared its little neck,—yet he hesitated.

“‘It is but a prick,’ she said, and the infant opened its bright eyes and gazed upon him.

“‘So like *her*!’ he whispered, and laid down the weapon.

“The words awoke a jealous fury; she seized

it; he was contemplating the lifeless and still lovely mother; her horrid work had commenced, but her hand was suddenly arrested, for with an agonising shriek, black and convulsed, he dropped at her feet! It was the first, I believe, of those fearful illnesses to which he has ever since been subject,—a meet judgment on the crime he was there to perpetrate! In a few hours he recovered, and the poor infant, it was found, had only been wounded—deeply enough, though, for the scar to be seen on his throat to this day. What was to be done became, then, the question—for destroy it neither dared, after such a warning, and the attempt must be concealed, and yet vengeance be sated. It was brought to me, and my own dear babe was buried with pomp in the tomb of the Daltoni. Well, I reared it, I loved it; and by force of that love, and that alone, I afterwards lived with the miscreant as a menial; for long, long years, bore with his reproaches, endured patiently his brutality, and saved

him from his worst enemy—himself. Yes, my Lord Cardinal, to you I swear—and to you, sad stranger, bowed down with grief from that fearful time—and to you, courageous, noble girl, who rushed to all but certain death yourself, to save *his* precious life,—to each and all I swear, on my solemn word, that he whom you know as Angelo Maturino is the lawful son of the Lady Nina and her husband; and when you recal him to his country to claim his birthright, on his brave white neck you will find the scar I tell of—the ineffaceable testimony to the truth of my wretched story!”

“Great God! I thank thee!” ejaculated Mr. Dimsdale, as rising up, he clasped his hands nervously together, and stood for a moment overpowered by the joyfulness of such a discovery.

“It is true!” said Frederic; “I have seen the mark, and asked how he came by it, but he could not tell me.”

“Dear Uncle, be composed,” murmured Leoline, and insensibly to himself she drew him into his chair again; “it is indeed a fearful happiness!”

There was a pause of a few moments, and a visible sensation amongst the domestics; but the Cardinal looked gravely around to repress any ebullition of feeling, and turning to Barbina, said,—“I have already expressed to you my deep sense of gratitude, Barbina, for all you have dared, and all you have suffered in behalf of the heir of my house, and that sentiment will, I am sure, be fully reciprocated by the rest of my family. I am exceedingly anxious to spare you the pain of adding more, on the present occasion, than is necessary to the right understanding of the nefarious proceedings which have been practised against us; and it only remains, I think, that you now make known to my nephew, who is the individual opposite to him that would fain supply the place of his excellent and worthy

son ; and also the cause of the change in the conduct of Signor Nasibo of late to our young kinsman."

" You are gracious and considerate, my Lord Cardinal, as you have ever been ; and I rejoice that my dismal task is well-nigh done, and my wretched life drawing near to its close. How do I know that I shall not be with you on the morrow ? nay, cumber the earth for many years to come ? Have I not seen that murderous eye ? and know I not its flash ? Know I not, also, that the heart which fires it, never relents, and that the arms which would shield me, are powerless against its fury ? There are no walls in Rome to protect, when a Sanfedo threatens ; his curse hovers over the victim, and as a vulture he darts upon his prey ! Nor would I have it otherwise. I have repented my early sins ; and, since I have been in this house, an angel has ministered unto me. Yes, in pure compassion for my terrible sufferings, that fair-haired



stranger lady has nightly glided into my chamber—has taught me from the Book of Life—has told me of the virtue of my Saviour's blood—and, thanks be to God for His infinite mercy, I can now defy Nicola Nasibo and all his train of earthly demons! Pitiless are they in their hate, and cruel in their vengeance, and many an innocent man have they sent to his last account! But their reign is over!—they are denounced! Now! now whilst I speak, Young Italy is in their accursed haunts! Their daggers, their revolvers, their parchment scroll, their odious oath, their devilry, are all exposed! Hark! for methinks I hear the hoarse shout! Hark! for the hour of doom is approaching! Yes, the slayer shall be slain, and his wickedness shall cease, and his victim is ready! Hark! hark!”

The poor creature had worked herself into a fit of phrensy, and it is doubtful if she could ever have been brought back to the point, had not Basino again lost his self-command.

“Wretch! traitress! hag!” he screamed,  
“what mean ye?”

She turned and gazed full upon him, then raising her fore-finger, and speaking slowly, said,—

“Nicola Nasibo, you were ever cunning, but a woman’s wit has been more than a match for you. Know, then, that it never happened, either when you coaxed or when you drove me into my own room, and turned the key, that I remained there; for, having anticipated the moment might come when I should have to flee for my life, I contrived a sliding panel in my wainscot, which, with all your suspicion and acuteness, you never discovered. Through this I made my way to a window on a line with those of your gallery, and creeping along the parapet, I not only saw, but overheard, all that transpired in that den of iniquity. Do you wish for a proof? Listen! The husband of the Lady Nina was there proclaimed an infidel, and doomed to a slow and painful

death, soon to have been consummated; and it was your own hand that gave the poisoned draught to the noble Gaspino, whose politics thwarted your views. I know, also, that the soil of the *Cortile* scarce covers the remains of your secret victims, and my eyes have been dim since they witnessed the rehearsal of the tragedy of the fifteenth. Then was it that my noble boy was doomed to fall, but I saved him! Yes, I fled here and fled there, and for once your hate was disappointed, and your fierce hand stayed! And why was he to have been butchered? Why? but because he was upright—he was truthful—he *would* do his duty to the poor state—his heart bled for the unhappy—he relieved their misery, and he saved his friend! Yes, Nasibo, he mocked your vengeance, and therefore the die was cast! Could you have made him your tool—had he been willing to second your vile ambition—all would have been well. Ah! a fearful struggle it has been! Your worst

enemy could have devised no bitterer pang !  
Each time that rage over-mastered your reason,  
the blow was arrested, his good angel saved  
him, and at last — ”

“ ’Tis false ! ” hoarsely muttered Nasibo.  
“ My Lord, why listen further to such insensate raving ? ”

Barbina was not discomposed by the interruption, but calmly continued,—“ I know he was denounced by another, and that the accusation took you by surprise ; but *you* know that the cogitations of the night reconciled you to the measure, and that, to make sure, you chose yourself to be the assassin. There is not a deed of your hand, nor a thought of your heart that is not known to me ; so seek no more to interrupt my words. He thwarted you, and you hated him—hated him with all the intensity of your nature. Did you not testify it by your last foul lie to him ? *Your* son, and he knew your crimes ! Poór fellow ! is he not stricken to the earth ? Have you

not sent him forth on the wide world with a brand, like the brand of Cain, upon his soul? You *had* loved him, it is true, for he recalled his mother. Yes, vile deceiver! when to me and my poor sister, whose hearts you broke, whose peace you destroyed,—at that very time, when by oaths and promises you bound us ignorantly and madly to yourself, you were loving another—loving her in wildness and in phrensy!—loving her to the destruction of your own soul!—and, alas! alas! you finished by sacrificing her, pure and excellent as she was, to that brutality, which in the end is the choice portion of all your victims! Nicola Nasibo, I had the mildness of the dove, till you taught me the fierceness of the vulture! But I was true to *you*, till you raised your hand against *his* spotless life; and then, as I always warned you—emphatically warned you I would—I became your betrayer! I was, and you know it, for long and weary years, the uncomplaining companion of your toilsome days, the soother of

your horror-stricken hours of darkness; but you broke the pact,—you turned against the only thing I had left to love. My oath was registered, and my oath must be redeemed! My Lord Cardinal, the young man by his side is not all evil; there is some good in his heart, but he has been tutored in villany. He is the son of the Abbé Boudon, an infamous man, and an early associate of Nasibo, to whose care he committed the education of his boy. Unhappy pupil of a more unhappy teacher! Nicola Nasibo! the scene of your wickedness shall know you no more! Gariboni and his troop have, perhaps, even now ransacked your vile abode! Your unholy studies, your death-philters, your lists of the obnoxious and denounced,—the bones of your victims are possibly this moment exposed to the execration of the mob! One thing I have rescued, and one only—the deeds which belong to his Eminence, the parchment of inheritance for my nursling.”

She bowed her head, and Nasibo rose ; he was deathly pale, he tried for utterance, but words failed him, and there was a murmur of satisfaction among the household, which the Cardinal instantly suppressed ; and, turning to Mr. Dimsdale, he said with evident emotion,—

“ I congratulate you, Sir, most sincerely, on the information which assures you, not only of the acquisition of a son, but of a son whom you may be proud to own,—a man admired for his various endowments, esteemed for his unwavering integrity, and beloved by all who have happily experienced the nobility of his heart. I have to crave your pardon for a concealment of the fact, which was in truth made known to me on the fatal fifteenth,—that day so ominous to Rome, but, by the mercy of God, so auspicious to the future happiness of our family ! But it was needful to become possessed of papers, title-deeds to some property in which you and your son are nearly interested. The seminary of Glaslyn I was

induced to found in memory of my late beloved niece ; and I had had it, I considered, made legally over to our Church, to be by her appropriated for ever. But by accident I discovered that this had not been done, and that the documents which I signed foolishly, without inspection, were in reality a deed of gift to our common persecutor, Nasibo. Certain events which have recently transpired at Glaslyn, combined with a change of sentiment on my own part, have induced me to alter my first intention, and those demesnes are already annexed to the estates of Plas Penryn, and at your future disposal. And now, Nicola Nasibo, what defence have you to make ? You stand charged with a vile and wicked conspiracy against the heir of my house. Firstly, as having concealed his existence, and endeavoured to foist another person in his place ; and secondly, as having forged a document, depriving him of part of his inheritance. There are other acts, not exactly amenable, perhaps,



to the law, but which are sufficiently obvious and malicious, that cannot fail to deprive you of any lingering commiseration we might entertain for one who had so long been an intimate and trusted friend. It is hardly needful to advert to the series of diabolical letters with which you harassed my nephew ; to the placing near him his own child, thereby subjecting him to the pangs by which nature asserted her rights, and your barbarous *will* controlled her yearnings ; and finally, by bringing forward, as the claimant of his affections and his fortune, the individual whom we know, by undoubted testimony, you had put in intimate relations with him, for the express purpose of abridging his mortal life. Again, Nicola Nasibo, I ask you, have you any defence you wish to make here, or do you reserve it till called, as you assuredly will be, before a judicial tribunal ?”

“ Weak and besotted dotard !” Nasibo burst forth, “ think you your sham court, your dese-

crated robes, your ingenious lies, have alarmed *my* understanding—aroused a fear in *my* breast? that a contemptible plot thrust into the mouth of an infamous woman, a disgrace to her sex, will have power to injure *me*—me, the confidant of princes, the friend of Pio Nono? Back to your bed, ye drivelling idiot! and back to your barren mountains, ye graceless savages! Nicola Nasibo defies ye all! Thus, and thus, he defies ye to the death!”

Simultaneously, as it seemed, there was a double shot, and the space occupied by the Cardinal and the Dimsdales was obscured by smoke. Before the *sbirri* could advance a step, and whilst the servants were speechless with terror, he sprang to the end of the table where Barbina sate, with a horrible oath plunged a dagger in her bosom, and then, with his friends, walked deliberately through the side entrance, and left the Palazzo.

## CHAPTER X.

"Inscribed above the portal, from afar,  
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,  
Legible only by the light they give,  
Stand the soul-quick'ning words—*Believe and Live!*"  
COWPER.

AN awful scene presented itself in the hall of the Daltoni, when the different individuals there assembled had in some measure recovered their scattered senses.

Leoline, with her quick perception, had marked the eye of the assassin, and rapid as was the movement of the hand to the bosom, she discerned in an instant his aim and purpose. With the rapidity of thought, therefore, she cast herself on her uncle's bosom,

and thus, with the exception of his arm and shoulder, forced him behind the pillar which stood just in front of his chair.

There she now lay, her arms tightly clasped round his neck, and motionless as death; whilst Mr. Dimsdale, his face colourless, and blood welling from one side, gave not the slightest symptom of life. Frederic was the first on the alert; he disengaged his sister, and having ascertained she was unhurt and only faint, had her conveyed to her own chamber; then tying a handkerchief tightly over his uncle's wound, and sprinkling him copiously with water, he discovered to his great joy that he still lived. He had just uttered a thankful exclamation, when a shriek from Adela attracted him to her side.

Half-paralysed with terror, she had been leaning against the high back of the Cardinal's chair. The old man was sitting upright, his head inclined, as if gazing intently on his nephew, his right hand slightly raised, and

his countenance calm and placid as usual. She leant forward to tell him the injury to Mr. Dimsdale was not in a mortal part, but he neither spoke nor moved; his eyes were fixed and rayless—he was a corpse!

“I foresaw it, I feared it; I warned him!” she screamed, wringing her hands. “Death! death! death!”

It was in vain that Frederic resorted to his little store of means which had proved effectual with Mr. Dimsdale. There was no external injury; but, in conjunction with other maladies, the Cardinal had long laboured under disease of the heart, and his niece had been forewarned that his end, come when it might, would be fearfully sudden.

Dr. Carneggi, his physician, who now made his appearance, pronounced the vital spark to have fled for ever, and turned his attention to the end of the hall, where several of the domestics were grouped round Barbina. The villain there had done his work. The thrust

was mortal; she might live an hour at the furthest—longer was impossible.

She heard the decision with great calmness, and only begged neither to be moved nor tortured. After a few moments, in a low whisper, she said, "Let me see *her*—the fair-haired foreigner."

Frederic flew to his sister's apartment; she was barely recovered, but he roused her to a sense of the necessity of exertion, and taking her in his arms, carried her to the side of the dying woman.

There was a gleam of satisfaction in Barbina's eyes as she approached her; and, at a motion of her hand, Frederic and the servants withdrew to the other extremity of the hall.

"My child," she said to Leoline, who bent down her head, for it was evident she spoke with difficulty, "he loves you,—loves you with the tenderness of a mother, yet the idolatrous respect and passionate devotion of a lover. But he will flee you; he will rush

to the furthest extremity of the earth rather than see you again—for honour bids him do so. You must seek him nevertheless; seek him and find him too, and that quickly; for is he not gone forth nearly penniless, and quite broken-hearted, with indifferent health, and neither friend nor father's name to pass him in the world? Find him I say; and when found, love him, cherish him, trust him, for he is worthy!"

She felt in her pocket, and with some little difficulty produced a key, which she placed in Leoline's hand.

"Take this," she continued; "in a cabinet in the room where I have been lodged, you will find papers, jewels, money—they are his; not a *bajocckio* did I ever take for the care of him, I loved him too well; and my poor sister collected and gave me every scrap of writing which could help to prove his claims. That I did not make use of them before, is a deep, deep grief, at this hour; but

I swore a solemn oath never to betray the father of my babe, so long as he acted a father's part towards *him*. When he raised his murderous hand to slay my nursling, then was I free; and, oh! tell me, sweet child, will another besides myself appear against him before God this day? I saw you tried to save,—did you, did you succeed?" She pressed Leoline's hand convulsively, and the tears stood in her eyes.

"My brother tells me," said Leoline, "that our dear uncle is only slightly wounded, and is merely faint from loss of blood."

"Thank God! thank God!" she exclaimed fervently; "one crime, one deadly crime the less! Ah! I loved him *once*—how madly words can never tell! And what was my reward? Curses, blows, imprisonment, starvation—whatever his fierce and cruel temper suggested at the moment; and now—death! Still, had he kept his word, I had never been a traitor; but the slightest opposition



to his towering, haughty will, and it mattered not from whom or whence it came; the blow was ready—the doom was sealed! Faithless and reckless in love—fierce and vindictive in hate—grasping at wealth—and sneering at heaven and heaven's Lord,—wretched, fearful being!" She closed her eyes, and her hand, which still clasped that of Leoline, grew cold and clammy. "You and yours have much to forgive!" she murmured, in a few moments; "*can* you forgive me?"

"Forgive you, dear creature!" said Leoline, and the tears coursed each other down her cheeks,—“what do we not owe you? Think of the happiness to my dear uncle of finding such a son, such a friend; and never should we have known it all but through you! We shall bless your memory, every one of us, as long as we live. But think no more of us, dear Barbina, nor even of him, nor yet of poor Angelo,—all will be well, no doubt, in God's good time, but think of your own soul,

and whither it is fast fleeing ; think whether you can meet the holy Redeemer with joy, with thankfulness for all His mercies."

She sank upon her knees, and kissed reverentially the withered hand that still rested in her own ; at the same instant, a sharp spasm convulsed the features of the dying woman, and a moist dew settled upon her brow. Her eyes were closed, but in a few moments she murmured very low,—“ You have been the angel of the covenant to me, and God has been very good. Pray for me ! ”

Leoline bowed down her head ; she could with difficulty command her voice, and her heart heaved hysterically ; but, at intervals, she whispered words which evidently gave peace and comfort.

When she ceased, there was a faint “ Amen,” then a sigh—a short pause—another sigh—and all was still !

Leoline *felt* it was over, and yet she neither

looked up nor rose from her knees ; she was spell-bound and could not stir.

A little time previously, there had been a hurried movement overhead, and Frederic and the rest had left her alone ; yet was she not frightened, but absorbed—awe-stricken ! A fellow-creature, who so shortly before had detailed a life of sin and sorrow, had now ceased to be—was for ever severed from the hopes, and fears, and varied sufferings of the flesh—had become at this moment a denizen of an unknown sphere—already assumed, peradventure, a glorious form—acquired a new and heightened consciousness—and was installed, she humbly hoped, the companion of saints and angels.

Alas ! how trivial did all earthly things appear in connection with such a change ! How insane the eagerness of men in their pursuits ! Who had loved, who had dared, who had suffered with such intensity as poor Barbina ? Yet, at the close of her fitful life,

she had found but *one* hope in which she could rest, but *one* name which could bring her peace!

Wearied, and almost faint with the painful excitement she had gone through, in a little time her thoughts became confused, and a delicious dream stole over her senses. In this she became identified, as it were, with the departed spirit—a sharer of its bliss—a participator in its glory; the tender light of a roseate cloud surrounded her, and sounds of gentlest music broke upon her ear. Floating here and there were forms of sylph-like symmetry; but round, and above, and over all, was a flood of light and beauty; for the spirit of love was there, and love made existence happiness, and happiness became vocal in one continuous and soul-thrilling song of praise.

How long she remained in this trance she knew not, or what deprived her suddenly of all consciousness she never could recollect;

but it was somewhat less than an hour after Barbina had ceased to breathe, that she was found insensible at the feet of the corpse, whilst a wild uproar rang in the *cortile* of the Palazzo,—shouting, and singing, and cursing, and the mingled tramp of horses and armed heels.

## CHAPTER XI.

“ The cry of blood  
Is heard,—the measure of their crimes is full :  
Such mercy as the Moor at Auria gave,  
Such mercy hath he found this dreadful hour.”

SOUTHEY.

It is startling in these days to meet with any national trait or circumstance, which recalls those long-past ages in which brute force preceded argument, and the sword supplied the place of moral conviction. Yet, when we read the details of the brief epoch of the Roman Republic of '49, the mind is forcibly carried back to the 13th century, when bands of mercenaries, under the adventurers, Guarnieri, Fra Moriale, Conrad Lando, and our own memorable tailor, Sir John Hawkwood,

sold their prowess, first to one State, then to another, and found their best account in fomenting those national animosities, which seem for ever destined to prove the bane of the Italian Peninsula.

After the interval of uncertainty, which followed the ignominious flight of Pio Nono, a triumvirate was formed, on whom the civil routine of government devolved, whilst the task of openly maintaining their authority fell, not on some tried commander, at the head of an army of patriots, but on the notorious Gariboni and his *corps franc*, as though the city had sunk to that depth of degradation, that its very existence could be maintained only by the dregs and feculence of other nations.

The sudden irruption of a body of 3000 men, actuated by no aim but the acquisition of plunder, and recognising no law save the will of an irresponsible and profligate leader, soon taught the bewildered citizens their real

position and prospects, whilst the priests, more than any other body, were the objects of the relentless hatred of the invaders. Unlike every known political convulsion, the cruel excesses of this are for ever lost to history. In open battle, in public executions, a tolerable estimate may be formed of the number of the slain; but the vindictive and wary Italian still makes his thrust in the dark, and unblest earth must yield her dead, and sullen waters disgorge their prey, ere a guess even can be formed of the victims on this occasion. Certain it is, that incredible numbers disappeared and were never heard of again, whilst the bodies that lay scarcely concealed from the eye of day, in the gardens of different religious houses, left no question as to the deeds of the brigands in those quarters.

Gariboni himself was a character singularly adapted for the execution of the bloody work he had undertaken, and he possessed, besides, qualities which strongly excited the enthusiasm



of his followers. Insensible to the suggestions either of pity or remorse, he could talk calmly, or even jocosely, with his victim, and motion at the same instant to his attendants to prepare for his immediate destruction ; whilst brave, determined, and scrupulously just in the distribution of plunder, an unwavering confidence was placed in the wisdom of his decrees. His attire, too, sends us again to those times, when, by the capture of the senses, reason could be laid asleep, and it still had its influence over a people at once excitable and imaginative. He wore a green blouse, turned up with red and slashed sleeves ; red trowsers buttoned up the sides ; a low hat with a large plume of black feathers ; the collar of his shirt turned down to show his neck ; an embroidered pelisse thrown across his shoulders ; a lance in his hand, a carbine hanging by his side ; a belt with a brace of pistols, a sword, and another brace of pistols in his holsters. His officers wore a red blouse, the common

soldiers blue, and all with the same description of arms.

They are represented as having entered Rome in the most tumultuous manner, and, possessing themselves of the finest palaces as quarters, to have acted in all points rather as a conquering army than a band of sympathising patriots. The spot fixed upon for the chief was the rich convent of Santa Helena, situated at the extremity of the grounds of the Negroni, and commanding a panoramic view of the city. As he entered the sacred precincts, attended by a small body of his followers, many a female glance, long turned from carnal vanities, rested with satisfaction on his clear blue eye, high forehead, small mouth, luxuriant hair falling in rich curls about his neck, and graceful moustache; and many a heart that ought to have been lost in dreams of Divine love and universal charity, hushed its momentary fears at the appearance of so noble and imposing an invader.

Alas! so instinctive is our devotion to the power of beauty, why does it ever deceive us? Why is it not always the veil of the divine—the shrine of truth? Small space, however, had these recluses to meditate on its charms or its snares. Scarcely acknowledging their courtesy, the brigands invaded their sanctuary, and all, from the aged superioress to the blooming novice, were driven forth homeless and penniless, amid the brutal jeers of ribaldry, and scarcely less offensive scoffs of infidelity. But the attention that was denied to the rights and feelings of the defenceless, was not long in being directed towards a well-stocked larder and cellar; and Gariboni, throwing aside his arms, and directing his staff to do the same, the adventures of their march and the wonderment elicited by their *entrée*, lost none of their raciness in the intervals of an ample repast, seasoned by a libation of the best Sicilian wine.

“The old hags knew what was good for the

body at all events," said Gariboni, holding up his goblet critically to survey its contents, "It is to be hoped their retirement has taught them likewise what may be for their souls' welfare, since, if I guess aright, they will never more forget their sins in such nectar as this. Here is to our success, my boys! and a long train of it to boot, to keep us in equally good quarters! But where is Terni? That rascal is always absent, when one would be most gladdened by his presence. I summoned him; why did he not attend us?"

"He took his seat, Signor, at the end of the board," said Volterra, "made one of his usual hasty meals, and before we have had time to toast his ex-Holiness, will doubtless have reconnoitered and prepared us a stirring raid. May I be prophetic! for here he comes to answer for himself."

At this moment, a tall youth entered the refectory, and, doffing his cap and plume, advanced with the ease of an acknowledged

favourite to the right hand of the chief, and laid before him a small and delicately folded billet. There was a play about his mouth, and a twinkle in his eye, as, drawing a chair to the table, he helped himself to wine, and begged immediate attention might be paid to the document.

“No, no,” said Gariboni; “time enough for that. Order in all things, even our orgies—wine first, and women after; the lady Abbess must wait.”

“No lady Abbess penned that,” said Terni, “but a good sensible wench, who understands the mettle a freebooter is made of. Read it, General; it was put into my hands by a child, and open as you see it.”

Gariboni glanced his eye over the note.

“Aha!” said he; “the outside belies the contents, which are pithy, though the writing is coarse, and the words ill-spelt. Listen comrades!”

“To General Gariboni, Liberator of the

Oppressed ! Revenger of the Wronged !—  
Commence your work, noblest of men, with an  
act of virtue ! Crush beneath your armed heel  
a viper and a murderer ! Among the ruins  
of Diocletian's Baths you will find a strange  
abode ; it is raised upon broken pillars, and  
you will think it a hay-loft. Penetrate it—  
there are riches ; and to whom are riches due  
but to the saviour of the city ? Destroy it,  
for it has been the abode of villany ! But, as  
you would have the blessing of one, now about  
to appear before the judgment-seat, spare not  
the wretch who grovels there ! Hunt out, with  
key and pick-axe, all his devilry ! Expose to  
an indignant people his death-lists, his death-  
philters ! and let their shouts and execrations  
be the last sounds on his ear of that earth  
which he has polluted by his presence ! I am  
avenged ! I die content ! His dagger will  
drink my blood, but he will hasten the next  
moment, on wings of fear, to his own de-  
struction !

“General, may God prosper you in all right! and may the wife of your love never learn the hard task—to *hate*!

(Signed) “A DEAD WOMAN.”

“Forbid it, Heaven!” said Gariboni, after a moment’s pause, “my gentle Francesca! Comrades, women are angels or devils, and sometimes both; but I have a shrewd guess it is we who make them what they are. This is a notable scoundrel, I have no doubt, and a priest, for a ducat! Terni, you know all about him, of course, and the hay-loft too. Is the prize for the first division? or, may we send some out-scouts for the sacking?”

“It lies within a stone’s throw, General,” said Terni, “and the villain is, as you say, a priest. His treasure they report to be immense; and from the blue flames and the red, and the noxious vapours which issue from his chimneys—to say nothing of them asked and black-mantled gentry who resort to him at

dead of night—he is considered to live not only in communion with the devil, but with a legion of his angels. I have set spies in all directions to bring us the knave alive ; and I vote that we lose no time in taking our account out of his den of iniquity.”

“Tush, lad !” said Gariboni ; “you have no romance in your nature,—we are gentlemen and soldiers—not burglars and hangmen. We will make acquaintance, in a reputable way, with this lover of the *dead woman* ; we will examine his hanger accidentally, and so test the accuracy of her statement, which, after all, savours a little of exaggeration and prophecy, and may be no more than a snare for our noble selves,—who knows ? At all events, he shall introduce us both peacefully and courteously into his dwelling ; and then, should we find human nature to have been outraged by his instrumentality, why, the sword of vengeance need not rust in the scabbard of cowardice. Another glass, my men ! We



shall have adventures enough, never doubt it, amongst these cowed and scowling sinners; but remember, whilst we avenge, we must likewise spare the helpless. This" — he filled and raised his glass—"to the bright-eyed descendants of the noble and virtuous Lucretia! A bumper every one of you, and we drink it standing!"

The toast was responded to with rapturous applause, and there had already been sufficient wine drunk for many of the party to be considerably excited, and ripe for any deed, however daring. Caps were waving, and favourite damsels being named, who perchance had but an indifferent claim to the distinction; and it was becoming a wild scene of wassail, when the chief, who on no occasion lost his own self-possession, was beckoned to the window by Terni.

"There he is," said the latter, "and a young fellow with him, not much better than himself. Those rascals have missed them!"

“ We will do it ourselves,” said Gariboni, “ and show to the world that a Colonna could not beat us in noble bearing.”

He returned to his place, and gave another toast, then whispered a few words to Volterra, who glided into his chair ; and, taking up his sword and cap, and accompanied by Terni, he left the room.

## CHAPTER XII.

“ O thou dense cloud  
Of black and baleful darkness, deep’ning round,  
Boundless, eternal, and by hope uncheered !  
O wretch, wretch, wretch ! How piercing is the sting  
Of phrensy, and the memory of the past ! ”

SOPHOCLES’ *Edipus*.

FEARFULLY interested as Basino—or Nasibo as we ought now to call him—had been in the morning’s revelations at the Daltoni, it was not likely that he should hear the announcement made by Barbina, and not tremble lest his abode, with all its hideous mysteries, should, as she said, ~~become~~ the object of sack and pillage—of wonder, indignation, and disgust.

The arrival of Gariboni had been looked for during the last week ; whilst, from the

unscrupulous character of the wandering chieftain, and the utter profligacy of his companions, the most disastrous results were feared, by all who had either wealth to attract cupidity, or position to excite malevolence.

Nasibo was also aware, that the Church and her ministers were the peculiar object of their hatred and spoliation ; and yet, would they but delay their arrival for a single day, he for one was safe,—in a day he would be far away, and no vestige would be left to tell who had inhabited that rude and uncouth pile in the Negroni. But that night there was to be a meeting of the *Sanfedi*—everything was already prepared for their reception ; and whatever deed of vengeance he might have left unaccomplished at the Daltoni, could be safely committed to the zeal and diligence of that fearful brotherhood. With hurried steps, therefore, he was passing the convent of San Helena, in his way from the Cardinal's to his own dwelling, when

descried by Terni ; and he had nearly reached his bourne when he was met, apparently by accident, by that personage and Gariboni. The rencontre was peculiarly untoward in the then excited state of his mind, nor would it have happened, had he not stopped to dismiss Boldero, who, sorely disappointed by the unexpected turn of the adventure, clung pertinaciously to him, in order to ascertain the next move to be made in the business. Gariboni was a shrewd discerner of character, and, from familiarity with villany, knew it in its every grade and shade ; one glance, therefore, sufficed to bare to him the secret springs of the vile wretch before him, and his own plan of action was quickly determined. Raising his plumed hat with a peculiar grace as he approached, he introduced himself ; and, with the ease of an old acquaintance, motioned to the Padre that he would walk in the direction he was taking. Nasibo was disconcerted by a familiarity so unexpected, and a manner

which it was impossible to repulse without manifest ill-breeding, and maintained, as they went on, but an indifferent show of attention to Gariboni's running commentary on political events. When they drew near his dwelling, he turned his steps in the direction leading to the Quirinal; but Gariboni stopped, placed himself unintentionally as it were before him, and said,—

“Pardon me, Padre; you are taking the wrong turn, whilst I, you see, know the road to your aerial abode as well as if I had helped to rear it. The fact is, when we entered the city, it was described to me as well suited for an outpost to over-awe this region, and it had a gallery, I was told, in which I might litter down a whole Company; but it appeared to me too great a liberty to take with science and piety, to say nothing of what is due to yourself personally, to quarter my rough fellows in such a *sanctum*; so I have disposed of the first division in the convent yonder, and as they

fill every nook and cranny of it, I am fain to offer you my own fair company, and that of my comrade here, as a substitute. We have dined, so do not disturb yourself for our entertainment, whilst a mat on the floor at all times suffices for a soldier's bed : and if, furthermore, you will give us your valuable assistance in the drawing up of some resolutions for the Council to-morrow, you may do good service to the State, and no discredit to yourself, devoted as we all know you to have been to the old *régime*.

Nasibo's lip quivered ; it was dangerous to thwart such guests ; it was still more dangerous to receive them, yet the case might have been worse. Gariboni played with the hilt of his sword, and watched the dilemma with a smile upon his countenance.

"I should be most happy to receive you, General," said Nasibo at length, and with some hesitation, "if I really possessed the power of offering you proper accommodation,

but my housekeeper is—just dead, in fact; and I am in reality, at the present moment—a hermit.”

“No apology is needful,” said Gariboni, moving onwards; “we ask but one night’s shelter, and that is the least we have a right to demand from the citizens, in whose behoof we are willing to shed our blood. A bottle of your far-famed Falernian, and your good advice, and we will protect you thenceforward from the vultures within the city, and the wolves without. Know you that the Gallic scoundrels are about to proffer their aid to Pio? but we shall give them a warm reception, I promise you. Aha! this is your nest!—what a pity it does not lie in the way for the first assault! What fine loop-holes for our guns, Terni! You turn pale, Padre—early days for that! What a charming collection of antediluvian relics! If I were not a soldier, I would turn philosopher, and prove that Pliny was a dunce, and the pious Moses a



blunderer in the earth's chronology—but lead on ! ”

*Bon grè, mal grè*, Nasibo was obliged to obey, and uttering sundry excuses, ushered the warriors up the narrow staircase, and then into his sitting-room, which, in its dust and disorder, certainly did not belie his previous representation. Seeing, however, he had better make a virtue of necessity, he set to work to kindle a fire, sweeping off for the purpose all the papers which lay upon the table, and piling them on the grate with a trepidation he could barely conceal. He then produced wine and dried fruits, biscuits and olives, and invited his guests warmly to partake of his cheer.

They were nothing loth, and the hours fled, and bottle succeeded bottle, till the trio became loquacious, confidential, even affectionate. But a nice observer might have detected, that though appearing to follow the lead, Gariboni was himself abstemious, and also, that whilst he seemed to fall in with the tenor and tone

of conversation adopted, no stray unwary word escaped himself.

From the agitation of the morning in part, and in part from not having tasted food for many hours, the Padre was wholly unnerved; and, accustomed at all times to drink freely, he now indulged recklessly in potations, which left him unguarded and defenceless.

"You are the man after my own heart," he said to Gariboni, "and I honour you, General. You have a fine free spirit, and I would like nothing better than to join your ranks."

"A minister of religion would find himself strangely out of place there, methinks—aye, Terni? My rough fellows have little to say to chaplains; and I should scarcely be surprised at their roasting alive the first one who ventured to exhort them to attend mass."

"And show their sense if they did," hiccupped Nasibo. "The mass! what is the mass but a vile and idolatrous mummary? what is

the best we teach but a tissue of lies, fitted to make dupes of women and children? God, Saviour, Virgin Mother, saints, angels, devils—what a farce! General, you are a sensible man, so I speak out. Chaplain!—No, no, I want to be no chaplain! Give me a trusty firelock to do the work of retribution in the field, and a sharp, keen-edged, little bosom companion like this”—he drew forth his stiletto—“for private purposes, and Count Nasibo, known for his youthful sins as Padre Basino, will join you, General, heart and hand, and do you some secret service moreover you little calculate upon. Fill your glasses, my friends; this is the right sort of stuff, and the right time to quaff it; fill to the brim, and we will drink—‘Confusion to the Pope in this world, and St. Peter in the other!’”

“A jolly sort of fellow, by Heaven, General!” said Terni. “Allow me, Padre, just to feel that piece of cold iron of yours; it has done service, I see, and recent service too.”

He put out his hand, and as Nasibo handed him the stiletto, a large *gout* of blood trickled from the hilt and fell into his glass. The soldiers exchanged a glance, whilst he feigned not to see it; but in a few minutes he quietly pushed the vessel aside, and reached some antique cups with which to wind up the carouse. He filled himself a bumper, and passing the bottle to his guests, continued,—

“There has been a long reign in the holy city of lies, tyranny, treachery, murder, and humbug; men quaking for their bodies, and women and fools for their souls; nay, so hot has been the purgatory of this world, it has been almost impossible for our brains to find fuel for that in the next. But those fables are gone by; the whole system is an anachronism; the age of reason has begun, the reign of right is inaugurated. General, I drink your health! General, you bring to the glorious cause a lion heart and an iron hand, and success shall crown you! Yes,

freedom, the soul's freedom, shall wreath the laurels for your brow ! What ! can I not give you a chart more precious than any which conqueror ever yet possessed of an enemy's country ? Can I not bare to you the secret mind of every human creature in Rome ? Are not the prayers of woman, the love of youth, the desires of manhood made known to us, the spiritual fathers ? and are not the passions of the multitude fashioned by us, directed by us, *used by us* ? General, I swear to you that, at this moment, I could introduce you readily to the chamber of the beauty, the closet of the student, the cabinet of the plotting Cardinal, or the jewel-room of the dastard prince,—ah ! as readily as I drink this to your honour ! Do you accept my services ? I offer them in good faith, full and free, and no reservation—aye or nay, General ? ”

Gariboni looked at Terni, but his youthful ally was fast sinking into a state of insensibility ; he then fixed his cold, calm eye on the

Padre, who had still the sense left to be conscious of a scrutiny too pervading and acute to be altogether agreeable. But his mental astuteness had long been yielding its vantage-ground to the animal ferocity of his nature. Thwarted in his affections, and thwarted in his ambition, he had now no future, whilst the recent gratification of his hatred in the death of his rival—for he did not suppose he could possibly have missed his aim—gave a reckless hilarity to his bearing, more repulsive, if possible, than any other phase under which he could have been contemplated by a stranger.

Gariboni shuddered involuntarily as he finished the brief survey; then throwing his arms upon the table, and leaning forward familiarly towards him, he said,—

“ You are not fully aware, perhaps, that there are requisitions in joining even a *corps franc*; to wit, a recruit must be ours *in toto*, not by halves. Now, you are a fellow of a secret Society, and a Society, moreover, which we are

pledged to exterminate, root and branch. The *Sanfedi* plotted the death of the patriot Vorni; by the hand of a Sanfedi Vorni fell; and by the might that dwells in a soldier's arm, by the honour that dwells in a soldier's heart, I have sworn to avenge the death of Vorni! Priest, I have sworn to pursue the murderers of Vorni, by sword, by flood, or by fire! Wealth shall not buy them, pity shall not spare them!—merciless and bloody was the deed, and merciless and bloody shall the retribution be! Bethink you, then, what chance you would have in my company."

"Vorni was a temporiser, a hypocrite," said Nasibo, who saw he must make a vigorous effort, and collect all his senses, and use all his craft; "none knew his natural capabilities better than I. Why, it was I, General, who placed him at the helm; everything then was in my hands,—I held the conscience, such as it was—certainly the confidence—of the Pope. No one could be better affected to Count Vorni

than myself ; but no sooner was he in power than he grew upstart ; and not only he, but his minions, even to a boy—yes, General, a boy—a boy, too, whom I had reared—a beggar brat whom I had educated and placed in his ranks—bearded me to my face ! ”

“ Private motives are but too often the basis of public acts,” said Gariboni composedly.

“ I was not his murderer,” said he, somewhat hurriedly.

“ I am aware of that,” replied the General, “ and also that you are bound by an oath not to reveal who was—bound, chained by an oath, at once hateful and impious, vile and devilish.”

“ The oath of Sanfedism is indeed what you say,” responded Nasibo ; “ and how or by what infatuation men could ever have been found to enter into such a compact, is both strange and wonderful. The only solution to be found is in the fact, that it is a society chiefly composed, and wholly organised by men, whose sole dependence rests upon a



system they inwardly repudiate and despise, yet cannot dispense with. The Church has been maintained for ages, merely as the vehicle of temporal supremacy. Of the myriads who minister at her altars all over the globe, I give you my solemn word, ninety-nine out of every hundred secretly abjure her doctrines, and ridicule her pretensions. This is a fact too obvious to be longer concealed, and her downfall is therefore a matter of time only. The Sanfedists protect her, and they are the most abominable miscreants, the most blood-thirsty scoundrels under the sun."

"And you are of them!—how was it?"

"Ah, General, the story of a life—love, hate, revenge! But it is all over! all over this very day! I have no longer a being—a personal existence—I am yours—the State's; why do you doubt me?"

"I have told you honestly," said Gariboni, "why we cannot accept you."

"Is there no condition—no vantage-ground

—no favour with a liberator—for one who holds the secrets not merely of this contemptible hierarchy, but of the mightiest courts in Europe? Till the recent events, his Holiness never held a pen but at my dictation; he was a false dastard, and I spurn him! Bethink you, General, is there no mean?" he thrust forward his head imploringly, and his countenance was abject in the extreme. A smile of contempt and scorn lurked beneath the moustache of the soldier, but he said in an even tone,—

"One, and only one."

"Name it!"

"Give me a free entrance, with twenty of my men, to the next meeting of the Sanfedi."

Nasibo's eyes sparkled. "This night, this very night," he said, "beneath this very roof. General, they are an holocaust worthy of your cause!"

"No treachery—aye?"

"My hand upon it." He extended his

palm, but the outlaw touched it not, and merely bowed.

"Enough," said he; "you could perhaps give me a list of names?"

"In one instant."

He had scarcely retired into his inner room to fetch the document, than he reflected on the excessive imprudence with which he had thrown himself into the power of a marauder and a bandit,—the reckless *insouciance* by which he had broken his oath, and forfeited the protection of a brotherhood, bound to defend him to the death under all risks, and in the most perilous circumstances. But the sudden exposure of his past life by Barbina—the quick sundering of all those ties of love and hate, on which every interest and feeling had so long hung suspended—the fierce explosion of his own passions—had shaken him like an earthquake, whilst the potations in which he had indulged, and which would have paralysed the nerves of any other man, had driven him for

once entirely off his guard. With deep bitterness he now cursed his own folly, dipped his head into cold water, and then took a few drops of a powerful elixir, which instantaneously cleansed his brain from any remaining fumes of the carouse. Having adjusted his dress, a point in which he was always particular, he was about to return to the sitting-room, when a rapid and dazzling flash of light past the window attracted his attention, and opening the casement, he looked out. The brief twilight of an Italian sky rendered surrounding objects dim and indistinct, and in the direction of the convent, night seemed already to have spread her mysterious mantle. He watched a few moments, and the flash of a gun and then a rocket, flung in the direction in which he stood, and expending itself, he fancied, upon his very roof, first raised something like doubt and trepidation in his breast. In a second, a responsive signal hissed past his head: was it possible that his guest meant

treachery? He flew to the door, and his hand was upon the latch—he would seize and destroy him on the spot! but his habitual cunning interposed, and, crouching down, he cast a furtive glance through the key-hole.

To his amazement, there sate the chieftain, with his arms spread upon the table precisely as he had left him, except that his head had sunk upon his breast, and he seemed to have fallen asleep; and there lay his companion extended upon two chairs, and giving sonorous testimony that he was really in the land of oblivion. He returned to the window, and soon became sensible that there was a guard without. A little consideration, however, convinced him, that this was a precaution for the person of a General both wise and customary, and he felt rather relieved than otherwise, when his eye, having become accustomed to the darkness which now prevailed, he discerned a single patrol, who seemed to make the circuit of his dwelling.

Still, in spite of himself, an uneasy sensation crept over him : he was as a bird in the net of the fowler—he must persevere and gain the good will of the chief, or all was over. Withdrawing from the window, he struck a light, and went to his bureau for the paper he came to seek. It was readily found, for it lay uppermost ; and then, touching a secret slide, he looked into a deep cavity, where once had lain the title-deeds of Glaslyn. But the traitress had done her work—the parchments were gone, and with them a packet of papers, certificates, letters, and divers documents, some proving the birth and lineage of Angelo, and others bearing upon his subsequent career. Again there came over him that tide of hatred and revenge which had overwhelmed him on the first discovery ; one thing only could be done—and done it should be : it was by Angelo he had been ruined with his sovereign, and betrayed in his schemes of private vengeance, and therefore, Angelo should

die! He could not possibly pursue him himself,—and if he did, experience had fully taught how powerless he was beneath the glance of an eye which so forcibly recalled the worshipped Nina. But Boldero was young, active, and daring; and though all chance was lost of enriching him with the rightful possessions of his victim, yet the pittance bequeathed by the Abbé to his son remained in his power, and he would make the gift of that, the reward of zeal and success in this murderous mission. The idea gave a sort of electric vigour to his thoughts and movements. It was impossible to forecast what might be the results of the coming night, but he decided it was necessary to be prepared for the worst, and withdrawing his pistols from his breast-pocket, he examined and then reloaded them with the greatest care.

After this, he inspected his treasured hoard, which Barbina had not exaggerated. There were jewels of the finest water and most costly amount, rouleaux of gold, and paper

specie of every civilised country. These riches he contrived to secrete about his person, by inserting them between the lining and the cloth of his garments; and then, taking a copious draught of water, he returned to the next apartment. His guests were still in a deep sleep, and he hesitated a moment, to think how he might best take advantage of the temporary reprieve. To escape by the proper entrance was hazardous, if not impossible; but at the end of the gallery there was a way—a difficult one—but he would try it. Shading his candle carefully, therefore, from the eyes of the sleepers, he opened the outer door very gently, and proceeding with cat-like caution, had reached the end of the passage, when a strong current of air extinguished the light. It mattered little, however; he reached the door without difficulty, raised the heavy curtain which fell before it, counted the well-known paces, and found himself, without let or hindrance, momentarily seated, to

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recover breath, on his own most iniquitous throne of life and death. Whilst he searched in his pocket for what he never moved without possessing, an instantaneous match, a sort of suffocation came over him. He knew the room must be empty, and yet he *felt* as if it were full—full of breathing and ferocious men—of men, adepts in iniquity, and unconscious of pity. Was it fancy, or did the feathers over his head sway to and fro, with a funereal movement? and, was it fancy, or did the bowls of human blood, with which the brothers ratified their fearful oath, send forth a noxious fume—a grave-like vapour? His fingers trembled as they failed to find what they sought, and his frame shook with an indefinable sense of terror, when, slowly but most surely, there came up the hall the measured, heavy step of an armed man. He listened—he held his breath—yet, tramp, tramp, tramp it came, and then stopped immediately by his side.

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"Lights!" said a voice of thunder, and in a moment, a myriad of torches gleamed against the sable drapery, and cast a lurid light over the diabolic paraphernalia upon the table. When he recovered the sudden blaze of light, and could look around, he was not a little surprised at the spectacle which presented itself. Along one side of the chamber was ranged a double file of soldiers, the inner line holding on high flaming torches, and the outer with their carbines ready primed for action. Opposite to them, with their arms pinioned, and confined with leathern thongs to their seats, sat about twenty of the leading members of the Sanfedi—their cloaks flung back, their hats slouched over their brows, and their countenances, some exhibiting intense ferocity, others the most abject fear. At the end of the table, immediately facing him, and in the garb and accoutrements of a lieutenant of the *corps*, was the brutal Calusso—a fiendish malice in his eye, and a gloating satisfaction expanding his coarse and repulsive features.

“ Bind the *traitors!* ” said the same voice of thunder, which was that of the General, and in an instant, a lasso was flung around both Nasibo and Calusso, who were thus rendered powerless as their orethren. The former felt that all was over, and, closing his eyes and compressing his lips till they were invisible, seemed passively to resign himself to a fate which nothing could avert: but the latter, aware of his great strength, plunged furiously, uttered a volley of oaths and execrations, and was evidently resolved not to part with his life without a struggle.

“ Prick him ! ” said the General, and a bayonet was thrust between his shoulders, but not deeply enough to affect life.

Gariboni then advanced to about the middle of the vacant side of the table, and immediately in front of his men, and setting down a wine glass he had been holding in his hand, he said,—

“ Miscreants and murderers ! a few words

to your ear, and but a few, before you are sent out of a world which you have dishonoured by your crimes ! Under the pretence of defending the interests of a Church, whose doctrines you repudiate, and of a State whose welfare you have betrayed, you have been long banded and bound together by oaths, which you have dared to call on the supreme God to ratify and attest ! Beneath the sanction of these well-sounding motives, you have insinuated your members into every grade, rank, and profession of your countrymen, there to shed innocent blood, as private vengeance or momentary passion gave the impulse. But, not content with secret and midnight slaughter, grown bold by impunity, and reckless by hardihood,—in the face of day, the wisest and kindest of men, the most upright and sagacious of statesmen fell beneath your daggers ! To you, traitors,—traitors to your friends, and traitors to your oaths ! ”—he turned, and fixed, first upon Nasibo, then upon Calusso, a stern,

contemptuous frown,—“ I and my corps owe a peculiar obligation. You have done us the honour to suppose we are like yourselves, beasts of prey and blaspheming infidels ;—to save your wretched and accursed lives, you have denounced your brethren, and doubly forsworn your God ! As to him, my comrades,” —he pointed to Nasibo—“ that reptile, endued by some caprice of nature with the human form, and habited in the vestments of sanctity, I assure you, on my honour, it was without fee or favour, of his own free will, and wholly unsolicited, that he tendered his treason ! that he would have sacrificed alike guiltless man and helpless woman ; and, how do you suppose ? why, by means of the confessional — the sacred, the inviolable confessional ! ”—a deep groan of execration burst from the soldiers, and Gariboni continued,—“ He and his accomplices are now here to find, that the army of liberty are the avengers, not the abettors of wrong,—and that, though

taking some licence in the fulfilment of our mission, we respect humanity, and reverence a God! Upon Calusso and the other prisoners you will execute, briefly and mercifully, the sentence which their crimes so richly merit—Death! But that arch-fiend yonder,”—he looked at Nasibo,—“must first drink this,”—he handed the glass to Terni—“it is his best wine, and seasoned with what he loves as well—*blood—the blood of a foe, and a woman!*—a woman whom he betrayed in her youth, ill-treated in her after-life, and this morning sent, with his own hand, to her last account! Place it at his lips! if he refuse to swallow, your lances have points!” The hideous cup was presented, and sharp blades bristled around the wretched culprit, who, pale and trembling, swallowed the whole. Gariboni then took the arm of Terni, and walked towards the door, when, turning round, he waved his hat, and gave his men the signal—to fire!

## CHAPTER XIII.

“Thou who stealest fire  
From the fountains of the past,  
To glorify the present, O haste,  
Visit my low desire!  
Strengthen me, enlighten me!  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.”

“Small thought was there of life’s distress:  
For sure she deem’d no mist of earth could dull  
Those spirit-thrilling eyes, so keen and beautiful.”

ALFRED TENNYSON.

It was a delicious evening in May, in the year 1850. The woods that encompassed Glaslyn were in their first loveliness—a flood of life and light streamed around and about, and invisible rays—felt but hidden influences—separated the soul of the beholder from the cark and care of vulgar life. It is in the

nature of such scenes, and at such seasons, to disintegrate us, as it were, from the mass of our fellow-men; the glory that overwhelms the sense is uncontaminated by any admixture of human will; all things bear the stamp of omniscience; and the sweet warble of birds, and the light crackle of the bursting buds, announce an omnipresent sustainment. There is a harmony between these picture-glimpses of Almighty power, and the still breathings of our own spirit. Had not the fair face of earth been decked with beauty, we had not been gifted with an internal perception of beauty; one vital current circulates through all creation; and then do we draw nearest to the Supreme Cause when most devoutly regardful of His manifested perfections.

In a small alcove immediately facing the river, and commanding a view to the right and left of the winding valley, sat Mr. Dimsdale and Leoline,—the former watching the



eddies of the water formed by fish, that ever and anon rose to the surface, then sank into the depths; and the latter only looking up occasionally from a pamphlet, evidently just fresh from the publisher, in the perusal of which she seemed deeply interested. A visible change has come over both, since we last parted with them at the Palazzo Daltoni.

The uncle had become paler, more visibly sensitive, and attenuated: the helplessness of his wounded arm, which he wore in a sling, gave him the appearance of invalidism, whilst a profusion of silvery streaks in his once beautiful hair added the premature seal of age. Over the niece there had swept a lighter wing, but still it was the wing of time. Her fairy form was not less round and graceful, nor were furrows yet graven on her brow; but her cheek wore no longer its roseate bloom, her eyes shone with a deeper, a more intense light, and the arch smile that used to play upon her cherry lips, had given place to a

settled expression of anxiety and thoughtfulness. Yet was it less in these outward symptoms, than in the internal relations of the parties, that a most entire revolution might be discerned by a thoughtful observer.

He, the scathed and blighted one, who had once been haughty, unsocial, and love-repelling, had now learnt the sweet solace of companionship and affection ; whilst she, who, repulsed in her advances, and treated at best but as a favoured child, found herself almost suddenly called upon to share his inmost thoughts, administer to his every want, and, above all things, keep alive, with a woman's tact and tenderness, that hope in his soul, which the dire experience of the past stood ever ready to crush and annihilate. The interim had been one of painful uncertainty and suspense to each, for no clue had as yet been obtained to the retreat of Angelo.

Palestine, Syria, and Egypt, had been closely traversed by Frederic, but he had come upon

no track of the wanderer ; the running down of a vessel in the Bay of Alexandria, about the time of his flight, and the perishing of an individual answering his description, being the only and not very encouraging result of unintermitted inquiries and ceaseless exertion. The serious illness of the Lady Adela, who, on the dispersion of the party, had retired for awhile to a convent in the Apennines, had stopped his further progress ; he had recently returned to Italy, and was now almost daily expected at Plas Penryn, accompanied by his lovely bride.

Continued pursuit had, in fact, appeared vain and even childish ; and he had written to Mr. Dimsdale again and again, beseeching him to reconcile his mind to a catastrophe, of the occurrence of which there could no longer be a rational doubt. But, in spite of every discouragement, Leoline refused to banish hope from her bosom. Angelo being an expert swimmer, she would not hear of the possibility

of his being lost within sight of land. Whilst sympathising deeply in the mortification and misery inflicted on him, by the last infamous fiction of Nasibo, she felt convinced he would, as Barbina had said, flee to the uttermost ends of the earth, to hide his shame and devour his grief; still, she felt a sort of conviction that be where he might, he could not be inactive. There was no principle more vital with him, than that of responsibility to the Author of our being, for the talents committed to our care, however humble; whilst the desolate discouragements of his early life had neither checked a commendable ambition for his own personal advancement, nor impeded the exercise of the most generous benevolence in behalf of his fellow-creatures.

An accidental circumstance had, in a measure, confirmed this faith in his continued existence, and probable restoration to their hearts and hearth. Happening, as they passed through London, to await Mr. Dimsdale in a

bookseller's shop, she opened a periodical containing accounts of some missionary proceedings in the north of India. After glancing at it cursorily for some time, she found herself suddenly interested in the most lively manner by a letter purporting to be from a private gentleman, who found, whilst wandering in the wildest regions of the Ghauts, a colony of natives, whose simple life and gentle manners, he pictured at once with the enthusiasm of a poet, and the earnestness of a Christian. He described himself, when he arrived amongst them, as weary in body, and, from a course of events of peculiar and trying poignancy, depressed in mind to the last degree; still, he had been received with a cordial and courteous welcome, whilst the women and children had vied with each other in graceful assiduity to supply his necessities and divert his grief. Aided by a slight knowledge of eastern languages, he was soon enabled to enter into some sort of conversation with his entertainers,

and stated that, at the end of a month's sojourn, there were few points on which he could not freely communicate with the head of the tribe. Having been originally intended and educated for the ecclesiastical profession, religion naturally became an early subject of interest in his new position ; and he was not a little staggered to find he had fallen in with a remnant of Guebres, Gaurs, or fire-worshippers—pretended disciples and successors of the ancient Magi—but whom the Perses and Indian Brahmins accuse of having sensualised the pure and simple ideas of a Supreme Being, and introduced an Evil Principle into the government of the world.

“ I witnessed their rites,” he wrote, “ nor could I shrink with horror and affright, as some excellent men have been known to do, from the face of a superstition,” which, however fearfully at fault, still contained the essence of all piety, worship,—the undisguised and fervent worship of the soul ! Nay, further,—and let

not my European readers be shocked at the fact,—I even knelt down with the idolaters, and prayed, prayed earnestly to the true but ‘Unknown God’ of these outcast Gentiles, that He whom they ignorantly worshipped, I, even I, might graciously be permitted to declare unto them. And I arose comforted, for I felt assured that my petition was heard; that, in the depths of those solemn forests, beneath the shadow of those mighty hills, a Saviour would be proclaimed, and the wild desert re-echo with loud *hosannahs*, to His holy name! But I looked for no miracle; if the Divine Spirit should indeed descend upon my intended labours, it would be, I well knew, in strict conformity with the established laws, according to which those simple creatures had been originally organized by the Creator. Before, therefore, I attacked a faith connate with their very existence, I set myself to a serious analysis of their original capacities and affections, and found that, whilst endued with

perceptive, they were, as compared with Europeans, deficient in reflective power; and that, with very little animal energy, the moral sentiments were unusually refined and active. It was self-evident, therefore, with such an organization, that, to sow truth broad-cast, would be to scatter seed upon a rock—it might germinate, but never mature; so I endeavoured to gain the heart, before attacking the intellect, and this in the following simple manner:—In the mornings I mixed in the various pursuits of agriculture, their chief occupation; giving them an insight into the most improved modes of husbandry, and even constructing, roughly, some of our newly-invented machinery, the uses of which were soon apparent, and which they imitated with great zest and accuracy. The evenings I devoted to the instruction of their youth, and these quickly became periods of eager anticipation, and deep and solemn happiness. Seated with my back against one of their giant banians, the young



immediately round me, and an ever-increasing circle of adults beyond, I was accustomed to commence my lessons with some of those sublime sentences of their own Zoroaster, which have made him one of the earth's immortals ; and from these I proceeded, by gentle and insensible steps, to the inculcation of those grand and striking doctrines of Christianity, which, when rightly and temperately exhibited, assimilate with and nourish the soul of man, even as bread, the universal food, preserves and sustains his body.

“ But my pen would fail me were I to attempt to describe the general emotion, when I first revealed the fact of a future existence. Now, the eye of youth kindled with enthusiasm ! and mothers held up their infants, born, they proudly boasted, to people a nobler world than this ! And then, the aged crept close to me, with their tottering steps, and whispered in my ear their half-terrified misgivings ! Yes, the lame, the blind, the halt,

in lowest accents, lest the mole or the grasshopper should hear their revealings, said, trembling, 'Is this for me?' Shall I fear to own, shall I shrink to confess, that my heart heaved, that my pulse quivered as I gave my message—that message of hope and of consolation, which angels and archangels might have yearned to deliver,—‘*Believe and Live!*’ ”

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After a silence of some continuance, Mr. Dimsdale rose, crossed the little bridge which lay just beyond, walked for some time up and down the terrace by the river, formed by Angelo, and his own favourite promenade, and then, crossing the lawn, entered the College.

A deep silence reigned through that spacious building, and a chill of solitariness and despair stole over his heart, as, mechanically, he threaded the long halls, and then passed out into the corridors,—now bestrown with rubbish,

and almost choked with wild and tangled festoons of neglected parasites. This state of desolation arose from the establishment having been broken up immediately on the property passing into his possession ; facilities having presented themselves for the step, by a schism amongst the professors, and most of the pupils leaving on the recal of Maturin to Rome.

Aware of his devotion to the spot, and how much moreover it owed of its beauty to his taste and judgment, Mr. Dimsdale had held the design fondly at his heart to prepare it for a residence for this lost, but cherished son. Yet, so long a time had now elapsed without affording the slightest hint of his whereabouts, that even *his* morbid mind saw the necessity for some plan of immediate action.

He was soon joined by Leoline, and had he not been too absorbed by his own thoughts to look at her, he would have been struck by the bright light in her eye, and the exultant smile upon her lip ; but as she placed herself

by his side, he continued gazing abstractedly on the scene before him, and said at length,—

“ I have been thinking, Niece, that, with a little of your contrivance, this place might soon be made habitable, and that you and I could be very happy here. The hall is a little uncouth, to be sure, for only two of us ; but here are plenty of oranges and myrtles to fill it, and you should soon have a conservatory from which to keep up and vary the supply. A new place might give new ideas ; at all events, this would be associated with some in which we both love to indulge. The Plas is prepared for the bride, and settled upon Frederic ; and why should not the young couple begin life at once where I intend and hope, with God’s blessing, they will end it ? What do you say to my plan ? ”

“ It would be the sweetest thing in the world, Uncle, and I shall not sleep all night for thinking of it ! I love Glaslyn dearly ! but will you be so good as to step into the study, and

reach me down a book from the top shelf? I must see it this very moment, and before I can talk about anything else." Mr. Dimsdale followed her instinctively; he had become accustomed to submit himself to her wishes, for she was too affectionate and sensible a little tyrant to be ever resisted. "That is it," she said, as they reached the apartment where Angelo's books were still arranged, and she touched with her parasol a volume of Bishop Butler. "And now listen, Uncle mine, and tell me if I have indeed been only dreaming about poor Angelo being identical with that good genius of the Gaurs. The pamphlet I have been reading this evening has another letter from that wise and good creature, wherein he relates having sent to the Bishop of Calcutta, requesting him to dispatch immediately a regularly ordained missionary to this settlement in the mountains, which, by-the-bye, he had christened himself, and what do you suppose?"

Mr. Dimsdale shook his head.

“Why, Lynsalg, the nooney, as if any body could not find that out in a minute! Look!” And she took out her pencil, and transposed Glaslyn. “However, to go on with my story; the Bishop, according to his desire, instantly dispatched a Reverend Mr. Wilson, and there is a glowing description of the fountain in the wilderness, and the baptism of the whole tribe. Then came the laying the foundation of a church, of which he laid the first stone, and delivered an address on the occasion. His constitutional modesty most provokingly gives us only a glance of this, but enough happily for my purpose. He had been drawing the attention of the poor Indians to the grand prospect disclosed by the Christian religion of a future state, and reminding them how it happened, that, at the very hour of death, persons frequently showed their mind to be entirely sound—nay, that their memory, in particular, was often more correct and active than when they were in perfect health; which

proved, he proceeded, that there was no reasonable or justifiable ground for supposing that the change which destroyed the body, *could* destroy the soul, or even cause a momentary interruption of its functions. That argument we find used here in Butler's Analogy, and, in the margin of the page of his own volume, he has written these identical words, which follow in the address :—

“ ‘It no longer, therefore, admits of a doubt, that next to cultivating a habit of implicit trust in a superintending Providence, the highest duty we owe both to our Maker and ourselves, is to improve the divine faculty of mind or reason—that glorious gift, the germ in this world of a flower destined to unfold its perfections in eternity.’

“ Now, I appeal to common sense and common probabilities, my dear Uncle, whether two men could have drawn the same conclusion in *precisely the same words*? It is out of the question ! But then here comes the best, and

yet the worst part of the business. The church was soon completed in their rough style of architecture, and the ceremony of its consecration formed a farewell meeting between the writer and his interesting converts. He is in bad health, the climate would be certain death to him if he remained ; so, amidst the most moving tears and lamentations, they intreat him to leave them. It is vain that he tells them he should be content to die amongst them—that he has no country, no home, no friend in the world ; they will not hear him, but they give him two of the finest youths of the tribe, sons of the Pasha, or Patriarch, to nurse and tend him, and keep him still, as it were, bound to their hearts and interests. Much affected at their love and earnestness, he accepts their gift, but upon trust, upon conditions. He will bring the young men to Britain himself, and place them where they will be made good and wise. He cannot stay in that country longer than to see them settled, but he will



make a voyage to recover his health, if it should be God's good pleasure, and after a time will bring them back to their home, and himself instruct and guide them in the high and holy duties of ministers of their new church, and teachers of the tribe. Now, Uncle dearest, is not all this so like him? so useful, so kind, so good! so beloved by every creature who comes in contact with him!"

The tears were coursing each other down Mr. Dimsdale's cheeks, for he could neither resist the force of her evidence, nor the gentle power of her eloquence; and with some difficulty he said,—“We must not, you know, be too sanguine; for should we be mistaken in this guess, think how *very* bitter will be our disappointment!"

“We need have but one fear,” said Leoline, with glistening eyes; “and that is, touching his health. I have always dreaded the effects on his constitution of such anguish of mind as he has gone through; still, he is on his way to

England, that is certain, if not already arrived, and the voyage is often beneficial to invalids. But, Uncle, only suppose it should happen that whilst the ardent, and enthusiastic, and fiery Fred has been spending a whole twelvemonth—to say nothing of a thousand pounds—in tracing our cousin *bodily*, and failed—I, little I—with no other assistance than the memory that stored his words and writings, and the intuition that told me he *must be doing good*, shall have traced him *mentally*, and succeeded ! Shall I not for once have the laugh against my clever, my rapid, my best of brothers ?”

“ Yes, my darling, and he will be the first to confess it ; and, probably, draw your picture in guise of a wee mouse gnawing a net to liberate a lion. But, alas ! alas ! our lion is not even in sight as yet ; and see, the dew is descending—we must mount our steeds, and turn homewards.”

\* \* \* \*

Our readers, we feel quite assured, have not

forgotten our friends Rosey and Bruno. Those faithful animals had both flourished during their mistress' residence abroad ; and each, in its peculiar way, testified an undeniable and joyous recognition on her return. Rosey, to be sure, might be a little less agile than formerly, which Rob, the groom, accounted for by old age, and Leoline by over-feeding ; but Bruno was in the possession of all his faculties, physical, moral, and intellectual,—and now walked as majestically in the van with Mr. Dimsdale and his niece, as he had done on that eventful day when his half-human cry brought the frantic Angelo to the rescue.

Mary Bell was standing at the door of the Nyth to make her curtsey to the squire, and catch a glimpse at her nursling as they passed. Leoline stooped towards her, and whispered a few words in her ear ; but she merely nodded her head gravely, and dropped another curtsey ; and when they were gone, muttered to herself,—

“ I liked the lad well enough, Papist as he

was ; but, be he the squire's son, or be he what he may, I wish he had never been born ; for she is getting thinner and thinner, and paler and paler. So much reading, indeed !—what good will that do her ? Better have staid quietly where he was, and then it might have been all quietly brought about. A deal I should have cared for Jacob Bell, if he had just given me some musty books, and gone off again to the wars, instead of staying at home to marry me like an honest man ! Well, such ways these gentle folk scholars have, and she so pretty too ! But he had better make haste, if he means to have her—the little dove ! ”

As the party drew near the Plas, Leoline observed the pioneer quicken his pace, prick up his ears, wag his great tail, and give certain signs of an unusual joyousness of spirit, for which she could not account ; and as they progressed, Rosey also seemed to be seized with an active longing for home, for she put forth her strength in a brisk and very agreeable canter.

“ Ah, that is right,” mused Mr. Dimsdale, as his dapple grey caught the infection ; “ it is getting late—too late for that fragile child to be out ; it is very thoughtless of me ! ”—and his eye followed her with a look of admiring affection, as she rounded the point of the mountain which overhung the Plas.

When he came again within sight of her, she had stopped, turned to look at him, and was holding up a whip as a signal for him to listen ; whilst her hat and feather were thrown back upon her shoulders, her ringlets in a state of commotion, and her face was radiant with delight. But he caught the sound of the village bells, and, at the same instant, a bon-fire blazed and crackled on the opposite hill.

“ Poor Fred ! ” he said to himself, “ this zeal in the villagers will put him in raptures. Oh, that my other, and my own dear son, were but with him ! ”

Impatient as Leoline was to embrace her brother, with her usual fine feeling, she waited

till her uncle had overtaken her before she rode up to the back gates ; and when arrived there, she had to open them herself, for no domestic or straggler was to be seen about. In a minute or two, a travelling carriage covered with dust, dashed into the court-yard ; and, most unusual occurrence, Mrs. Dunning, the housekeeper, stepped forward to help her young mistress dismount.

“ My master, Miss Leoline,” she whispered mysteriously ; “ is he pretty well this evening ? ”

“ Quite well, Mrs. Dunning. Mr. Frederic is come home, is he not ? ”

“ Yes, Miss, and — ” Mr. Dimsdale came up at this moment, and drawing his niece’s hand through his arm, as he was wont to do on extraordinary occasions, led her through the vestibule into the library. They entered so noiselessly as not to be perceived by a group who were standing in the embrasure of the window in earnest conference.

“ We ought to have written,” said Frederic,

“we certainly ought ; it was most thoughtless !  
The surprise may affect him too much !”

“It is no surprise !” said Mr. Dimsdale, in a low but distinct and touching tone of voice ;  
“I am quite prepared to receive—and *welcome my son !*”

Much thinner, much paler, but more strikingly and spiritually handsome than ever, Angelo stepped forward, and would have knelt to receive the first fond grasp of a father’s hand :—but overpowered, despite his attempt at firmness, Mr. Dimsdale tottered, then fell upon the breast of his child, and wept !

## CHAPTER XIV.

" We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,  
Our neighbour and our work farewell ;  
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high  
For sinful man beneath the sky.

" The trivial round, the common task,  
Would furnish all we ought to ask ;  
Room to deny ourselves—a road  
To bring us daily nearer God."

KEBLE.

" Seek not to know to-morrow's doom ;  
That is not ours which is to come.  
The present moment's all our store :  
The next, should Heav'n allow,  
Then this will be no more :  
So all our life is but one instant *now*."

CONGREVE.

HOURS of sorrow lag heavily along ; every step falls with a leaden sound, and their record is written on rock. But days of happiness fleet swiftly by ; their course is noiseless as the summer breeze, and when memory



would recal their history, it is found that their tablet was sand, which the last wave of joy rendered smooth and sparkling.

The woods of Glaslyn had doffed their robe of tender green, and the evening sun shed over them a ray which reflected every hue of gold ; whilst in the mansion, art, the hand-maid of wealth, had been busy, and the light finger of taste left many a token of its delicate tracery. A bright fire sparkled in the library, which the crisp air of October rendered welcome and cheery, as a happy family group passed into it from the saloon, to take their evening refection.

Leoline was mistress of the ceremonies, and a more lovely one could scarcely have been desired. She is attired in white, but the simple muslin of former days has given place to a softer, richer fabric, even as the gay laugh of the maiden has slid into the heart-felt smile of the wife.

Angelo is leaning over her chair, and gazing

upon her with all a husband's pride and fondness; and Mr. Dimsdale, looking young again, has seated himself in a *fauteuil* on her other side, and closed his eyes. Frederic is whispering and laughing with Adela in the window, his arm thrown lightly round her, and a roguish light sparkling in his eye. Leoline had a shrewd guess she was the subject of his merriment, and announced that her tea was ready.

"I have been asking this rattlepate husband of mine," said Adela, "whether he thought Angelo would have left *you* in the middle of Piccadilly alone, and frightened out of your senses, when upon your marriage trip?"

"And I have been asking my captious lady-wife," said Frederic, "if she would not have staid there all night, alone, and frightened out of her senses, rather than have had you *miss* your loving husband!"

"But imagine the scene!" responded Adela; "Three elegant and foreign-looking men had

passed us arm in arm,—the orientalism of two out of the three appearing, in spite of their English costume, and attracting general attention. They walked on till I had lost them entirely, when, dropping my hand as carelessly as he might have done a pocket-handkerchief, my affectionate bridegroom stopped short,—although there was a regular stream of pedestrians,—stood, as if suddenly petrified, then exclaimed,—‘That fellow in the middle is Angelo Maturin, if ever I saw him,’ and darted off like an arrow from a bow.”

“But why was he gone so long?” asked Leoline.

“They had turned down St. James’ Street,” said Frederic; “and I, never dreaming they could possibly go out of a straight line, posted on to Kensington Gardens, as a matter of course, and threaded the butterfly throng, like a hawk that could have eaten them all up; when, lo! on returning in despair, and broken-

hearted, I again caught sight of his worship ahead, and made him start, I believe—aye, old boy?”

“Indeed you did!” said Angelo; “and I started still more to find myself that evening in your travelling-carriage, instead of a cabin on board the *Euryanthe*, bound for New Zealand.”

“Well,” said Frederic, “a note to the captain settled that matter; and as he had made all the arrangements for his young infidels, why should he tarry in town when my dear little sister was dying for him here? But then, Adda, when we told him all, and he fainted, and we had no water — ”

“And you poured the whole of my last bottle of *eau-de-cologne* over his head,” said Adela.

“*Le malheur passé n'est bon qu'à être oublié,*” said Angelo.

“True!” said Mr. Dimsdale; “and it will be the height of ingratitude henceforth ever to dwell upon our past bitterness! We shall

never cease to bless you in our hearts, Fred, for your zeal in the cause ; but still there was a clue, you know,—there was the Analogy’—and he smiled.

Leoline blushed deeply, so deeply that she hid her face upon her husband’s shoulder ; and Frederic begged to ask when the next address was to be delivered to the infidel Guebres ?

“Those youths give such good promise,” said Angelo, “and will be so much more effective as teachers in their tribe than a stranger, that I must devote myself for the future, methinks, to my own infidel here”—and he parted the ringlets upon Leoline’s brow — “the infamous little Guebre, who fancied she could ever be forgotten !”

“And there is still another claim on you,” said Mr. Dimsdale, “of the same kind. Our arch-enemy, whom, if you please, we will from this hour banish from our conversation, as well as our thoughts, by way of climax to his slanderous falsehoods, accused *me* of being an

infidel and a blasphemer, a pantheist, and I know not what beside. In repairing the evils of my culpable neglect among our numerous and scattered tenantry, I will find you, my son, both ample and praiseworthy employment; but, for the short remnant of my days, let me beseech that you,—that none of my dear children,—ever leave me again.”

The tears started into Angelo’s eyes; he pressed his father’s hand, and said, with deep emotion,—

“With such ties, with such happiness, after so many trials, such an extremity of misery,—I can have no doubt, no hesitation, as to where the path of duty lies henceforth: and the sorrows of the past can have been to each and all of us but blessings in disguise, if from them we shall graciously have been permitted to realise that trust in a *superintending Providence*, which can make an earthly pilgrimage at once a pledge, and an antepast of heaven.”

THE END.

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